

**COMMISSION ON
THE NATIONAL GUARD AND RESERVES**

**HEARING ON
HOMELAND DEFENSE/HOMELAND SECURITY**

WEDNESDAY, MAY 3, 2006

**AFTERNOON SESSION
1:30 P.M. to 4:00 P.M.**

**NTSB CONFERENCE CENTER
WASHINGTON, DC**

WITNESSES:

**LTG H. STEVEN BLUM, USA,
CHIEF, NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU**

**MAJ GEN ROGER P. LEMPKE, ANG,
ADJUTANT GENERAL, NEBRASKA
AND PRESIDENT, ADJUTANTS GENERAL ASSOCIATION
OF THE UNITED STATES**

**REAR ADMIRAL KENNETH T. VENUTO, USCG,
ASSISTANT COMMANDANT FOR HR**

*Transcript by:
Federal News Service
Washington, D.C.*

ARNOLD PUNARO: (Microphone off) – securing the homeland. This morning we heard from the Department of Homeland Security and Department of Defense witnesses about the role of the National Guard and Reserve in homeland security and homeland defense. We also heard about the unity-of-effort issues raised in Hurricane Katrina after-action reports, particularly the White House’s “Lessons Learned” report, that I know all of you have focused on extensively. Clearly they were, in the testimony we have today, as well as in our discussions with various organizations and individuals, as well as our commission’s analysis, serious seams, gaps, and friction points between the federal agencies as well as with state and local governments.

Despite these interagency and intergovernmental balance-of-power issues, there appears to be widespread agreement that the National Guard in particular and the Reserves are ideally suited for the roles and responsibilities of homeland security and disaster relief because they are forward deployed in cities, towns, and rural communities across the nation. They are, as a rule, an integral part of local communities and are familiar with everything from first-responder procedures to low-lying roads likely to flood in the events of torrential rains.

And General Blum, we said this morning – I said in my opening statement and verified by the witnesses that the National Guard has long been the go-to force for both state and federal officials, whether it’s fighting fires or preventing looting, providing airport security, or responding to natural or manmade disasters. The need to respond to a disaster of Hurricane Katrina’s magnitude at a time when many of the National Guard’s best trained and best-equipped units were deployed to Iraq, posed challenges in manpower, equipment, and resources. Eight months later, at least based on the information that we have gathered to date, it does not appear those issues have gone away. If anything, the level of concern at least expressed to the commission has intensified.

Congressional witnesses – and there were 11 of them at our March hearing, including the chairman and ranking members of the two authorizing committees, as well as the chairs, co-chairs of the Guard and Reserve Caucuses and a number of other chairmen of the personnel subcommittees – they expressed concerns particularly over National Guard equipment issues: the amount of National Guard equipment left in Iraq, the inadequacy of plans to replace this equipment, the impact on the Guard’s ability to adequately train for future missions, and particularly the impact on the National Guard’s ability to fulfill its critical homeland security role without this equipment. Certainly these are legitimate concerns on their part, but we are fortunate that we have you here to address those issues at the perspective of the individual charge with carrying out those responsibilities.

I expect when we hear from the state governors in June after their legislative session is over, that we are going to get a similar earful when they testify as we have heard that message from them in their personal meetings with us. One of the governors, whose Guard brigade perform magnificently over in Iraq and had just gotten back told Commissioner Dawson and Commissioner Ball and myself – there may have been a couple other commissioners present. He says, Arnold, our brigade just got back and they are telling me, the National Guard is telling me they won't have the equipment for four years. What am I supposed to do in the four years when this brigade isn't going to have any equipment? What am I supposed to do here at home in my state? What am I supposed to do if my brigade has to go again? I mean, that is just a kind of rubber-hits-the-road kind of question that I think we need to deal with here today.

And we have the right panel of witnesses to answer these difficult questions: Lieutenant General Steve Blum, the chief of the National Guard Bureau, Major General Roger Lempke, the adjutant general of Nebraska. But he is actually appearing here today in his capacity as president of the Adjutant Generals' Association, and so really speaking on behalf of his 49 other co-adjutant generals – if I have got the number correct.

MAJOR GENERAL ROGER P. LEMPKE: (Off mike.)

MR. PUNARO: Okay, so I'm a Marine, so add that up for me – 54 other adjutant generals, and Rear Admiral Kenneth Venuto, the assistant commandant of the Coast Guard. So we thank each of you for being here today and for your continued dedicated service to the nation. The commission as we have it – almost every hearing, would like to recognize the truly extraordinary efforts of the men and women of the Coast Guard and the National Guard in saving lives all of the time, but particularly in those particularly in those critical early hours and days after Hurricane Katrina hit when other government entities at all levels in some people's eyes didn't measure up completely.

And, Admiral Venuto, while my remarks have been a little bit more focused on the DOD reserve components, we welcome you here this afternoon and look forward to hearing more about the role of the Coast Guard and the Coast Guard Reserve in countering maritime, port, and other homeland security threats. And so while the Coast Guard may be somewhat smaller in size, I can tell you from first-hand experience, in the scope, in the positive impact of the Coast Guard's efforts in calm times as well as in turbulent times, it's a remarkable outfit; it's a crackerjack outfit. We that have served in uniform know that and hopefully the American people have seen that. So we appreciate your service and that of your great institution as well as exploring with you a very important part of homeland defense. And port security, for one, is very much on people's minds.

So, General Blum, General Lemke, Admiral Venuto, we count on your experience and candor in these complex and sometimes controversial issues before us today. And without objection, your prepared statements will be placed in the records. So with that, General Blum, why don't we start with you?

LIEUTENANT GENERAL H. STEVEN BLUM: Well, thank you, Chairman Punaro, and members of the commission. Thanks for the opportunity to come here and dialogue with you this morning about the role of the National Guard and its important and essential role in homeland security, homeland defense, and disaster response here in the United States.

For the last 369 years, National Guardsmen have stepped away from their families and their jobs and responded to the calls of their states, their colonies, their nation, their communities to do whatever the president required or their local governor, and/or local leaders required for them. Today the tradition continues. As a matter of fact, we have probably gone back to our roots and have transformed to become the 21st century minutemen and women because we have to literally be able to transition from our civilian skills and our civilian jobs and leave our families and our classrooms and turn into soldiers and airmen on a moment's notice to respond to the call of the governor and in very short notice, shorter notice than ever before, to respond overseas in support of the president or the secretary of Defense to provide trained, ready, and equipped forces of the Army and Air Force because we only have an Army Guard and an Air Guard, to the combatant commanders abroad.

No mission has been too small or too large for us and no sacrifice has been too great. At the heart of every rescue in a hurricane is a Guardsman or a Coastguardsman or some heroic person who is willing to step away from their comfortable life and put theirs at risk to protect the lives and property of others. The Army and Air National Guard in the past year have demonstrated this ability in spades. We had 80,000 citizen soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan shouldering an extremely heavy and rightful load of ground combat, combat support, and service support, training in Iraq. We were training the Afghan National Army; we were providing special operations forces in Afghanistan.

We were providing embedded trainers to the Afghan National Army, had actually fought right along side of them; coached and mentored them and went into combat with them. We provided counter-terrorism forces in the Horn of Africa. We provided stability and support operations for all of the regional geographic combatant commanders around the globe and have a standing state partnership program that has endured for almost 17 years with 51 nations around the globe to help build partners and to expand the theater security cooperation initiatives of the combatant commanders.

While all of that was going on, while 80,000 people were away from their homes one year, boots on the ground, an average of 18 months away from their home and family defending our nation in the global war on terrorism, a terrible storm hit the Gulf Coast, which generated 50,000 citizen soldiers and airmen in a little over a week. And they came from every state and every territory, to include Guam, Puerto Rico, the District of Columbia, the Virgin Islands. They left their homes, which were clearly in the path of a hurricane to come and help those who are already ravaged by the hurricane. It was probably the Guard's finest hour.

On September the 2nd when the president went to New Orleans, they were deployed either in Mississippi, Louisiana, or around the globe: Over 135,000 citizen soldiers and airmen, and that does not include all of the tens of thousands that enabled that response to happen. It stayed right home in their zip code providing logistics and administrative and operational support to make that happen, maintenance and so forth.

The helicopters of the Army National Guard were credited for 17,443 saves – lives saved – not people just moved; lives saved, taken from places where they were going to perish to places where they were going to have a second chance at a life. At the same time the Air National Guard flew 70,000 American citizens out of the effects of Hurricane Katrina and relocated them to other parts of our great nation.

So the contribution of the National Guard was not the only part of the Department of Defense down there. I think Admiral Keating probably has testified that Northern Command sent Naval Marine and air and land forces into the region as well, but about a rough order of magnitude. About 80 percent of – actually, about 90 percent of the initial response, and about 80 percent of the total response to that hurricane came from your Army and Air National Guard, the uniform response.

And that is not to minimize in any way or measure the disproportionate great work done by the United States Coast Guard, small in numbers and great in effect in that hurricane as well. But I don't want the National Guard contribution missed or misunderstood, and I don't want somebody to think that we can only do hurricanes or we can only fight the global war on terrorism. I think we have demonstrated we can do all of those things simultaneously rather well.

So in my written testimony I outlined what the National Guard is doing in homeland defense, in support to civil authorities, but I don't want anybody in this room or this commission to think that I'm advocating that an organization called the National Guard do nothing but guard the nation here at home.

And I don't want anybody to advocate or think – draw for the conclusion that I am advocating the National Guard should be considered a separate service; I do not. I think we need to remain a federal reserve to the United States Army and a federal reserve of the United States Air Force. But I think we need to strengthen the understanding, the resourcing and the policies and the recognition that we are the only part of the Department of Defense that can be called by this nation's governors. And that is not well appreciated in policy, regulation, or resourcing, and that is something worthy of serious consideration.

Defending the homeland is a noble mission and we consider it our number-one priority, but it's not the only thing we do or it should not be the only thing we should prepare to do. We in the National Guard distribute our military units and equipment all across our nation. Literally there is no place where a significant population of Americans lives that you don't have a National Guard presence. We truly are dotted all across the landscape.

Each affected state in my judgment should always have access to 10 essential capabilities. They are command and control, aviation, engineering, civil support teams – which are weapons of mass destruction specialty teams – security forces, medical, transportation, maintenance, logistics, and communications. We can do this and we have pledged to do this with the governors of our great nation, and we have delivered on that promise. No state has less than 50 percent of its capabilities to be able to do these 10 essential things even though we are providing an unprecedented number of soldiers into the war zone.

I wish Commission Keane were here today because he and I have had long and heated discussions in the past about the role of the Army National Guard in combat. I am absolutely proud to tell you that as of today we have sent 39 brigade combat team equivalents to war in the last four-and-a-half years, and they have accorded themselves in nothing less than an outstanding fashion in Iraq, in Afghanistan, and in the Horn of Africa.

At the same time we have assumed 100 percent of the role of stability operations in Kosovo and Bosnia, and we are enforcing the peace treaty in the Sinai, all of these things going on without missing a beat here at home. And even on September the 2nd, on our busiest day in modern history for the National Guard, we had plenty of capacity left should we need it. We had over 100,000 available soldiers and airmen right here in this nation that we could have called on on a moment's notice and regenerated another force if necessary to handle another catastrophe the size of Katrina, and perhaps two.

We are leveraging existing combat capabilities that exist in the Army and the Air Force force structure that has been apportioned to its reserve component called COMPO 2 or the National Guard. We do not stand up any specific homeland security or homeland defense units. We take units that are needed by the United States Army and the United States Air Force to execute the air expeditionary force abroad or on our force generation model in the United States Army to generate land forces for the combatant commanders abroad, and we leverage those capabilities and apply them here at home.

So when you ask does Iraq and Afghanistan have an effect on the National Guard and its ability to do homeland security, you bet it has an effect; it has a positive effect. We have the best-led, best-trained, best-equipped combat experience, troops, that we have ever had in the history of the National Guard that can take that experience, that training, and that kind of know how and commitment and apply it to a problem here at home, and that is quite powerful when the government calls.

It is a different National Guard than existed five or six years ago. It is not only not your grandfather's National Guard; it is not even your older brother's National Guard. It is not the same National Guard that existed on the 10th of September 2001. We have transformed to have joint headquarters. We have stood up new force packages of units that can only provide a timely response to a weapon of mass destruction or a terrorist event that would involve a chemical, biological, radiological, or a high-yield

conventional weapon here at home. We are the only uniform force other than Marines CBIRF Battalion – I will concede they can do it, but other than them, we are the only force that can deliver that kind of capability for the first 96 hours no notice, and that is huge because in my judgment what you cannot deliver in the first 24 to 48 hours will be late to need and not seen as relevant or needed.

I anxiously await your questions.

MR. PUNARO: Thank you. I want to get a – because I think it is important for people to understand the different duty statuses – that is going to be one of the big issues. General Blum, you have been on continuous active duty as the head of the Guard Bureau. I think it has been two to three years. You know better than I, but that is a Title 10 position, correct?

GEN. BLUM: Yes, sir, that is. I have been in this position three years ago and about 14 days, but who's counting?

MR. PUNARO: So you would consider yourself a Title 10 active duty military officer?

GEN. BLUM: Sir, I have to.

MR. PUNARO: Right. Great. Okay, we're going to go to General Lempke next. And I'm making the assumption but you correct me that you of course are representing the Adjutant Generals' Association today, but you, as the adjutant general of the State of Nebraska, or in the capacity, you are probably on state active duty today, correct, so that would be Title 32? If you could grab the microphone from General Blum there.

GEN. LEMPKE: And actually I'll go one level a little different than that. When you say state active duty, that means something special. Actually I am on Title 32 orders today.

MR. PUNARO: Right.

GEN. LEMPKE: So I still follow the chain of command through my governor, which is different than General Blum's. If I had soldiers that were on, quote, unquote, "state active duty," if you will, they would be on duty directly through me to the governor and they would actually be being paid by the State of Nebraska in that capacity.

MR. PUNARO: Right, but if you're getting a paycheck today, it's coming from the State of Nebraska.

GEN. LEMPKE: That is correct.

MR. PUNARO: And Admiral Venuto, you are a continuous active-duty military officer. And I apologize for not knowing the Coast Guard title.

REAR ADMIRAL KENNETH T. VENUTO: It's Title 14.

MR. PUNARO: Title 14, yeah, but, okay – which is really – that is the Coast Guard equivalent of Title 10 in the Department of Defense. All right, so that is important for the commission, maybe not for the audience or anybody watching this, but these duty statuses become critically important as we talk about homeland defense and homeland security as you'll see when we get into the questions and answers.

So General Lempke, welcome, and we look forward to hearing from you.

GEN. LEMPKE: Thank you very much. Thank you very much, Commissioner Punaro, and I appreciate the opportunity to speak to you today on behalf of the Adjutants Generals of the 50 states, three territories, and the District of Columbia.

And what I would like to do is summarize my comments that are in for the record already. Some of these comments reflect a little bit on some of the testimony that you have heard already, and some of my comments go off into new directions, if you will.

I would like to first say a few words about this idea of operational reserve. It is something that you have discussed already, the National Guard moving from what was previously a strategic reserve to an operational reserve, and what exactly that means to us in the field. And the first and most obvious is that it means that we have to maintain a higher state of readiness if indeed we are going to be an operational reserve. And that means that we must be trained to a higher level for both our federal military duties if we are called to federal duty, and also it means that we must be prepared to support our state and region in the area of homeland security. So it automatically defines a higher state of readiness now than in the past.

There has been discussion about the 39-day training period that we go through every year and whether or not that is adequate, it needs to be more or less. But I would like to put a little different twist on the training that we accomplish. Two other words that I think are important here. One is equipment, not necessarily fully equipped but adequate equipment so that we can train our soldiers on the roles that they would be serving if called to serve their nation.

And I can give you examples of times when we have intended to train in the past but weren't able to because the equipment wasn't there, and that situation exists today to some extent with some of our brigades that have returned from the fight overseas. And it goes back to the question the governor was stating or the state official was stating to you.

The other area of that 39-day period is preparation. And part of that – an important key to preparing to train over a weekend is a fulltime force that does the planning for that weekend prior to it ever occurring, making sure the equipment, the personnel, the food, the range, whatever we do is set and ready to go so that two days is most productive for us. That is the key. So indeed I would recommend debating the 39

days being enough or not enough, but also recognize the equipment and also preparation are also two other factors that are important to us maintaining a high state of readiness.

I am not going to belabor the point, but certainly with the new pact that we had with the nation as an operational reserve means there needs to be some idea for the soldiers and airmen and their families as to exactly what that means. You have already discussed ARFORGEN, the Army rotation model. The Air Force is operated under the AEF for many years. Those discussion need to continue. You are going the right way in my opinion as to what that pact and what that understanding will need to be in the future.

Our leaders on the active-duty side at times need to better understand what capabilities we bring, what limitations that we must deal with within the state as they look to integrate us ever more into the fight against terrorism, and also what we do in the nation to support homeland defense and homeland security. And that gets into areas such as funding, equipping, and training.

And that finally leads to some of the laws that we believe need to be looked at and enacted to finally embed us as an operational reserve. Let me go now into two specific areas of legislation that the Adjutants General feel very strongly about. The first area of legislation is currently in work. My understanding is it has not been presented yet in any form within Congress. But what it does to provide changes to Title 32 and Title 10.

And it updates language that allows us more freedom in how we use some of our fulltime force. It allows us to adjust to changing missions at the national level so that we can perform missions both for the Army and the Air Force that are different than ever envisioned by our leaders and congressmen many years ago. So it cleans up many things in the Title 32, Title 10 area.

If that legislation does not end up getting inserted or introduced here shortly, then I would certainly hope that the commission would look strong and hard and what we are recommending in that area. It certainly is needed to help streamline our response capability to homeland security and how we can use our forces in that capability and certainly necessary if we are going to enter into new mission areas. General Cowley (sp), the Air Force vice chief, talked about this at length when he testified over a month ago.

The second piece of legislation, Senate 2658 and House 5200, were introduced recently. It is called the National Defense Enhancement and National Guard Empowerment Act. This piece of legislation in general seeks to provide a stronger voice for the National Guard at the highest leadership levels within our military and in NORTHCOM. And basically by elevating the chief to a higher level and by introducing National Guard leadership, especially into NORTHCOM, it provides the opportunity to provide a higher level of input and also experience into those kinds of discussions and decisions that involve the National Guard.

And from our perspective it's entirely appropriate. If you look back to previous changes, the Goldwater Act, back in the late-'80s – which was done, by the way, before

the end of the Cold War – a minor update to that in the late-'90s, which elevated the two directors of the Army and Air Guard to three-star status – it is time to recognize the Guard's role as an operational reserve and as a major force provider in probably any conflict that we're going to have in the foreseeable future in addition to our homeland defense and homeland security role. That is what that legislation is intended to do. Most importantly, it introduces National Guard leadership into the position where they can help advise the chairman of the Joint Chief of Staff with regard to key matters.

I would like to spend a few minutes talking about National Guard force structure in the sense only that, as you know, there has been a large discussion lately as to the make up of certain elements of the 106 brigades that are currently in the National Guard. Six of those brigades are being looked at for perhaps conversion to combat support or combat service support to brigades.

And I want to make sure that at least from the element of discussion here that we are clear on exactly what is happening there. Within a combat brigade, be it heavy or a light brigade, a lot of capability exists. As General Blum pointed out, you can strip away the machine guns, the artillery, you can strip away the heavy equipment, but what you have left is a highly capable outfit with many capabilities including medical, security, logistics, maintenance, and aviation that are able to support homeland defense and homeland security.

On the other hand, when you take a look at comparable combat service support brigades, you also find units that don't have near the number of Humvees, they don't have the amount of communications capability; they don't have the embedded medical capabilities. So automatically assuming that a combat service support brigade would be an adequate substitute for a combat brigade is not necessary sold. My only warning here is don't go by name alone. Look inside and look at the capability that is being provided by those units. We are currently through a general officer steering committee working with the army to define what those six brigades should look like in the future. I would caution, though, that as the Army comes to the National Guard for support for the global war on terrorism, we are doing many conversions of combat service support units to security forces units indicating that we should be careful before we back away from combat capability in the National Guard.

Just a moment on readiness – 2005 was a tough year for the ground elements of our national military, the Guard included. Of the components right now, though, we may be recovering among the best. Going from as low as 330,000, we are now approaching 340,000 and climbing in our recruiting and retention efforts. I do have a concern, though, as do the other adjutants general and that is the retention of our experienced members of the Guard, those senior captains, senior majors, and sergeant first class and higher. Many of those have served once overseas and are now coming up on a 20-year point. And unfortunately, whereas in the old days the plan was when you got to 20, everything beyond that was gravy; you hung on as long as you could; now they are taking second looks. Because of family, because of careers on the civilian side, and fear that maybe

they will get mobilized again, they are – when they reach the 20-year point, they are vested, they are looking more to retire.

The Army in particular has done a significant amount to incentivize the first-termers and those looking to maybe re-up for a second term. The bonus programs, the incentives are terrific and we are taking terrific advantage of those. We need to look harder now though at those careers, and we need to quite frankly keep some of those. I hate to look a head and see a force of sergeants and airmen and enlisted personnel without leadership – experienced leadership to take them over to the next fight.

So part of our recommendation is to take a hard look at, for example, the retirement system, and rather than looking at a flat-age retirement, looking at it more as an incentive, reducing retirement age by increasing years of service. Just as on the active side as you increase years of service, the amount of your retirement increases until you have reached your maximum. So we hope that the commission will take a hard look at that area.

I won't say much more about equipping the National Guard, but I would like to give you a quick example of how we work together in that area. Nebraska recently lost all of its helicopters. They are currently down to Fort Hood, all eight of our UA-60s getting ready to head overseas some time this fall. We were able to turn to Arizona to borrow two and then also look to Colorado and Missouri to support if, as we enter the fire season we need helicopter support. So we do have the capability within the states to cross level, level low and to support each other in the area of equipping. But of course – and so a state being down sometimes like us right now with helicopters, there are options out there. My message here is simply that there is a level of equipping that we need to be able to do that, but it may not be necessarily the level of full equipping that has been discussed.

I would finally just like to conclude with a couple of points. One is I hope that in your deliberations, you do choose to also talk to our professional organizations: Guard Association, National Guard Association of the United States, Reserve Officers Association, the Enlisted Association, the National Guard, and so forth so you can get the perspective of the members out there and their feelings especially with regard to family issues and other issues that affect them now that we are being mobilized to an extent greater than ever.

And finally, I would hope you would also pay a little bit of attention to – and perhaps with a hearing to discuss Air National Guard matters. The way we flow issues, we are working extensively now with the Air Force on just exactly what the Air Guard is going to look like in the future as the Air Force transforms and we must transform also. Many of the same issues that the Army is facing now with return to manpower, budget, and re-equipping and modernization also face the Air Force in the future. And the issues are slightly different at times. They certainly deserve a special look.

With that, I'll stop here, wait for your questions. I really appreciate the opportunity to represent the Adjutants General of the 54 states, territories, and D.C. here today. Thank you.

MR. PUNARO: Thank you very much. And I should mention that in terms of the associations you have cited, we are talking to and engage with each and every one of the ones you listed, plus we have a very extensive outreach going with the stakeholders in the business community, small- and large- and medium-sized businesses at the state, local, and federal level, family associations, county associations, first responders. It is over 250 separate organizations that we are talking to and dealing with, and we are also talking to the rank and file, we're talking to the senior enlisted, and some of our subcommittees are going to have some specific hearings on that because you are absolutely 100-percent dead on. We all up here know very well you have got to get out there and talk to the people that are doing it that are most affected by it at the deck plate levels or where the boots hit the ground. So we're doing that. But I appreciate it.

Admiral Venuto?

ADM. VENUTO: Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman, and distinguished members of the commission. On behalf of Admiral Collins, the Coast Guard's commandant, it is a pleasure for me to appear before you today to discuss the role of the Coast Guard Reserve in maritime, homeland security, and national defense. Before I begin, I wish to thank you for inviting the Coast Guard to appear before the commission. I would also like to thank you, Mr. Chairman, for recognizing the unique nature of the Coast Guard.

The Coast Guard has long recognized that mission success requires a well-trained reserve force. We share your interest in optimizing the laws and policies to govern the reserve component and look forward to working with you over the next year as you prepare your report for Congress and the secretary of Defense.

As you probably recognize, the Coast Guard is a military service, a maritime service, and a multi-mission service, and it is a workforce that has the unique blend of military capabilities as well as law enforcement and civil authorities that enable it to do a wide range of missions for the nation. The Coast Guard Reserve has served as a critical force multiplier enabling us to accomplish our mission especially over the last decade. Back in 1995, we made a decision to integrate our reserve force with our active duty force, which turned out to be a very critical and right decision for our organization.

And I would like to kind of correct part of my statement in paragraph two of my submitted statement and I want to clarify it. To explain what that means, nearly 91 percent of our 8,100 selected reserve members are assigned to Coast Guard units where they directly support homeland security and national defense operations. The majority of those members, 69 percent or well over 5,000, are assigned to active components, active-duty units, and are integrated with the active-duty units, so they don't have specific Reserve equipment. They serve alongside their active-duty members using the active-duty equipment.

About 22 percent, or about 1,800, support national defense missions in particular, specifically expeditionary responsibilities. We have eight port security units that are largely reserve-only that make up about a thousand members. They are usually used for expeditionary port security, but they are also used for domestic port security. We also have reservists that are assigned to naval coastal warfare squadrons as well as the combatant commander staffs. The remaining 9 percent are assigned to support the logistics forces that support the remainder of the Reserve.

The total alignment of the active-duty and the reserve component enables us to respond quickly and where needed at any time. And we have some unique call up authorities. First of all, we can be called up under Title 10, a presidential call up for national purposes. But our secretary, the secretary of Homeland Security, also has special reserve call-up authorities in Title 14 U.S. Code 712, which allows him to call up reservists for a period of 30 days over a four-month period for national contingencies, natural disasters.

He also has or she also has the authority to call up a reservist for 120 days over a two-year period for the same reasons. And these are unique authorities because we have used these authorities on a number – the secretaries – first of all, the secretary of Transportation and the secretary of Homeland Security used his authority 26 times in the course of the last 30 years, and 18 times we have actually called up reservists. During Hurricane Katrina, the secretary of Homeland Security called up – authorized the call up of 700 reservists to help us with Hurricane Katrina rescue recovery operations. And as you know, they were fully integrated into the Reserve, into our active-duty force of about 5,000 members that responded down in the New Orleans and Greater Gulf area saving 33,500 lives.

Currently there are no reservists that are still on an involuntary call-up associated with Hurricane Katrina, but we do have 100 reservists down in the Gulf area that have voluntarily come on active duty to help with the recovery operations there.

As one of the armed forces, the Coast Guard also plays a significant role in homeland security and national defense. Again, our reserve component serves as an absolute essential force multiplier. Since September 11th, 2001, we have cumulatively called up, under Title 10, 6,800 of the 8,100 reservists. During 2003, at the peak of our call-up in support of Iraqi Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom, we actually had 4,450 reservists of the 8,100 called up. The majority of those reservists served at the homeland. However, at the peak of Operation Iraqi Freedom, of the 1,250 Coast Guard members we had assigned in-theater, nearly half of them were reservists, most of them associated with the assignment of port security units.

In the wake of the largest mobilization in Coast Guard reserve history since World War II, we have undertaken a critical examination of how we might better recruit, train and mobilize and de-mobilize our reservists. Admiral Collins has made this a priority. Recently we undertook a very comprehensive study and as a result of that

created a reserve policy statement which basically outlines three core functional areas where we will deploy our reserve force.

And this is not new; it's just a validation of what we have been doing. Their first responsibility is maritime homeland security. Their second is domestic and expeditionary support of national defense. The third is domestic manmade or natural disaster rescue and recovery operations, which is really right in line with what the commission is looking at. This policy statement makes it clear where we want our reserve force to be. Over the course of the last three years, we have analyzed our selected reserves. We have restructured them and made them much more efficient and more operationally focused through reprogrammings.

I look forward to answering any of your questions, and again, thank you for the opportunity to speak to the commission on Reserve matters.

MR. PUNARO: Thank you for your statement.

I am going to start with a question for each of the witnesses, which is the same one I posed to our panel this morning of senior officials from the Department of Defense, and that is each of you has been involved in this in a variety of capacities over the last year or so. You have certainly all been involved in the after actions and the lessons learned from last season's hurricane and natural disaster season, and you are all going to be in place in your jobs as we start up here on 1 June with a new hurricane season. But, General Lempke, for the other state governors, there are a lot more things they are concerned about: forest fires, floods, and things of that nature.

So my question – and you can be – I'm going to ask you what is different this year than last year. And you can be thinking about that while I give you a little bit more background because I not only want to know what is different, but I want to address it in the context of each of your respective positions.

General Blum, you were the go-to guy of the go-to force for that, you know, and were able – getting on the phone with governors to get 50,000 Guards people down there in a couple of days on a volunteer basis in a Title 32 status. And also, you know first hand this issue of the balance between who owns the force and who controls the force. Probably nobody more than you, and particularly General Lempke, I know there is no doubt in your mind who your day-to-day boss is. I guarantee you I don't know the governor of Nebraska personally but I know the governors well enough to know they feel like they are the commanders and chiefs in their own states.

And they feel a keen sense of the responsibility not just for protecting the lives and property of the citizens in their state but for making sure that their Guard and Reserve is organized, trained, and equipped to respond both at home and overseas. And they also will point out to you very quickly they have a keen responsibility when they get back home that frankly some in our Department of Defense – not intentionally, but I mean – they aren't at Camp Lejeune, they are not at Camp Pendleton, they are not at some large

Air Force base; they are little communities all over the country. And so when they demobilize, it's really the state assets that are in place to help with that demobilization. And so they feel a keen set of responsibility.

And Admiral Venuto, you're in a new agency. You used to be in the Department of Transportation, so you have seen the growing pains of DHS. It's interesting too because the Coast Guard, you never hear about the Coast Guard. They work with state and local law enforcement every day, have for years. You don't hear about any of these problems. So maybe there is something the Coast Guard knows about how you balance this issue. And you're a Title – you're a federal force working with state and local officials all of the time. You know, maybe there is some insight you can give us as to how to deal with some of these balancing acts in terms of who is in charge because at some point, unity effort, unity of command.

So my question is basically what is different this year? And, two, what do you know about what is in place, procedures or processes, to deal with this difficult issue of at what point do you federalize the force or do you need to federalize the force and how should that work.

So, General Blum, I'll start with you.

GEN. BLUM: What is different than last year? We are better prepared. We have better plans at the state, the local, and the federal level. There has been extensive training and exercises conducted this year I am happy to say. I'm very proud that this has been done in a collaborative method. We will be able to provide much better situational awareness to those that need to know what the National Guard is prepared to do, is doing, and is going to do next than we did last time. We will be able to do more than we were able to do last time.

We have more forces available for this hurricane season. We have better equipment for this hurricane season. The Congress appropriated \$800 million post-Katrina that has all been expended and directed to improve command and control communications and vehicles and medical sets, those essential elements that are needed to respond in a hurricane or a natural disaster. Those pieces of communications are interoperable within the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps and the Coast Guard, and land and air elements and sea elements. And they also provide a bridge to the civilian local first responders, the emergency services folks, the police and firefighters that are going to be absolutely essential in any response in this nation.

The communications also are redundant, which is good because if one fails you have a backup. And they are also stand-alone, which means they can operate in environments where electricity, power, generation, and the normal infrastructure that allows cell phones, radios, telephone, television and other electronic means of communication, to include e-mail, are absent, such as we found last year in three parishes of Louisiana and most of Southern Mississippi.

And lastly, the emergency management assistance compacts have been strengthened and exercised, and as evidenced by the exercise we'll be having on the 17th of May in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, which will bring 11 states most likely to receive a hurricane if they come the season as predicted. And also will be there will be FEMA, government representatives from the states, emergency management personnel, the adjutants general, and the emergency planners, the J3s from the state joint force headquarters. So it will be a great blending of military government interagency that has responsibility for responding to the hurricane.

In short, last year we played a super bowl without a huddle or a scrimmage. This year we have huddled, we have scrimmaged, and we ought to be able to do better because we even had some better team equipment.

MR. PUNARO: What about the question of who owns the playbook?

GEN. BLUM: The governors own the playbook, sir, until the governors feel they need assistance. And then they pick up the phone and they call the president of the United States and they tell the president of the United States what they need that they don't have, and the president of the United States, I am absolutely convinced, is committed to making sure that his federal apparatus is better prepared than they were last year to deliver on call what the governors may be asking for.

And frankly, there is some good collaboration now in giving hints or planning in advance the requests for generic type of capabilities that may be required, that came out of these training and exercise programs so that we're not – basically we'll be cooking up in the kitchen what they think they are going to be needing to serve before they come in and ask for it. So it's turned into from going Peking duck to more of fast-food kind of a federal response for governors next year.

MR. PUNARO: But is there any change in the inherent process by which Dan Snyder overrules Joe Gibbs? I mean, why would anybody have anybody other than Joe Gibbs call the plays, but the team owner – I mean, the president – has the inherent authority to overrule the governor? I mean, this is the big question – is, has there been any discussion or change in the process and procedures at the federal level by which state control would turn over to federal control, or is it kind of the same as it was last year?

GEN. BLUM: Well, this is beyond my pay grade and authorization, but –

MR. PUNARO: Well, you're affected by it.

GEN. BLUM: Absolutely, and I am not aware of any discussions where there would be an imposition.

MR. PUNARO: So that part of the process has not changed in your mind – not different this year than last year.

GEN. BLUM: That part of the process, I am not aware of any changes or thoughts to change that process, nor are any – well, I guess you would have to ask the governors when you talk to them, but discussions with them – none of them have hinted that that is even being discussed.

MR. PUNARO: Great; thanks. Thank a lot.

General Lempke – and again, that is what I was trying to get at, and thank you, General Blum, for your consideration to sort of set it up because you are representing a group that works for the governors in terms of not only the answer to the first question in the mind of the tags, and by proxy the governors, what is different? And then, two, what about this issue of who is in control?

GEN. LEMPKE: And I think I'll go about this in reverse order, if that is okay, about who is in control. And just to maybe buttress a little bit of what General Blum said, from our perspective in the states – and I think it's pretty universal here – the scenario that would dictate turning over control from the governor to somebody else – extremely rare, and if you spend a lot of time focusing on that, you are probably missing, to follow the analogy here, most of the plays that are going to get run.

You know, we have been at this for many, many years. It was simply highlighted in Katrina. In 2004, we had a major tornado that wiped out a small town in Nebraska. I doubt if it even made The Washington Post – probably – but for us in Nebraska, it was a very serious thing, and we had federal support and help. We didn't have federal forces in, but we did have federal support for many, many sources, and of course it was a federal disaster. And we handle things like that in the states all of the time.

Perhaps the unique thing about the hurricane season is the regional nature. And to speak for General Blum here for a moment, there has been an awful lot of planning within the region to deal specifically with this season coming up. And I would say that the adjutant generals and the states were already talking, and that has been evidenced by the hurricanes that had swept through Florida in previous years and been handled with Florida and surrounding states. So that level has just heightened.

So I guess we don't spend a lot of time thinking about that one-in-a-million or one-in-a-thousand chance that a state is in such a bad situation that the governor can no longer accomplish his duties in the state and we can't support that.

Going back to what has changed or what is different, first let me say this, speaking from a state, and having looked at other states in how we supported Katrina and Rita. I guess – I'm not so sure that a lot needs to be changed from our perspective. General Blum mentioned the EMAC process already. There is some smoothing out that I think occurring there. And obviously with all of the needs in Louisiana from Katrina, certainly the EMACs were flowing hot and heavy. And eventually that was sorted out. I would certainly expect that to be better managed this time around.

I think that NORTHCOM perhaps has a better understanding perhaps of their role. The next time in a situation where, again, maybe federal forces aren't needed, but there is some sort of an oversight coordination function that is required at their level working with bureau and with other agencies.

I think information and status will be better, and let me just tell you a little story there. Our international guard fleet often launched using our normal mission numbers. Well, those mission number within the AMC, Air Mobility Command Control Center, are masked; they aren't normally tracked on a daily basis. So the Air Force doesn't know – and it's okay – what we are flying mission-wise on a daily basis.

Well, we were launching effective sorties down to support Katrina and they weren't picking them up at the Air Mobility Command. It turned out all they needed to do was make a couple of small changes and they could see everything. So they discovered that. Next time around they will know exactly what C-130s are going where, what KC-135s are going where so they can help coordinate using those air craft and those assets most effectively. I think you will examples of improvement like that throughout our forces.

I think you will see a quicker move to authorizing Title 32. And in my personal opinion, and I think the opinion of most of the adjutants general, perhaps the most important step that was taken due to General Blum was getting Title 32 authorized. When I am providing support from Nebraska to another state, it's under state active duty, which means the governor of the State of Nebraska is paying for that. And through the EMAC process, we will eventually – and I emphasize the word “eventually” – be reimbursed.

And when we worked the Montana fires three years ago or so, it took about nine months to a year, which means that the amount of support that we can provide from the state is based on the amount of our emergency management fund, which is limited in Nebraska and every other state. So in a major disaster such as this, the sooner that we can get cut over to Title 32, which means that we are automatically being reimbursed through federal means, the better. If there was any hesitancy from the states –

MR. PUNARO: So you want that federal money but not federal control, right?

GEN. LEMPKE: Well, yeah, exactly right – exactly right.

MR. PUNARO: I just wanted to make sure I had it right.

GEN. LEMPKE: I'll put it this way: The federal money is going to come to us eventually anyway through the EMAC. So we are not getting paid for something we're not going to do.

MR. PUNARO: So they reimburse the state active duty?

GEN. LEMPKE: Eventually, yes. And I do emphasize the eventually because that puts the state in a difficult situation until that reimbursement occurs, which can be many, many months later.

And so getting Title 32 enacted as soon as possible is important. This time around, quite frankly, we kind of moved ahead expecting it to happen. In going back, if I had – to go back and look at what I committed in the state versus what we had in our fund, we were probably touch and go. So that is – I think that will be different next time.

The other thing is units need to be able to move and operate self sufficiently in something as big as Katrina. And so that gets back a little bit to equipping and supplying. You need to have sufficient capability in a state so when a unit moves out it has got everything: communications, food, shelter, petrol, everything. We probably spent one extra day preparing in Nebraska before we sent ground forces so that when we did arrive, we were self-sufficient, ready to go. That is important.

MR. PUNARO: Okay, General Blum, do you want to add anything as we switch over to –

GEN. BLUM: Yes, I do. I would like to add on something I think that would be useful here because it's at the heart of – it is at the heart of the National Guard issue and discussion and roles of missions. And it really gets at the very essence of what this committee is looking at vis-à-vis the National Guard.

The National Guard is unique amongst all DOD. It's the only military force that is going to be called upon by the governors. That is not a bad thing; that is intended by the Constitution of the United States. That is what our Founding Fathers had in mind. That is what has survived all of the amendments and all of the re-looks of our Constitution.

You asked a question somewhat in a facetious manner but it is a very, very important point. It is not bad to have federal money, federal equipment, federal troops, i.e., the National Guard under state control in Title 32. That is what Title 32 enables. Just as Title 14 enables the Coast Guard to do law enforcement, Title 32 enables the National Guard to do law enforcement within the states of the United States, and it allows the military operations conducted by the Army and Air National Guard to stay the responsibility and under the authority and command and control of the governor. This is very, very useful.

If you were to Title 10 everybody for a response in this country – I'm not talking about anywhere else on the globe but the United States of America, you would do this in violation of the spirit of the Constitution; you would go – you would be in danger of stripping the governor of his or her elected authorities; you would in fact come close or put in danger military governments in the United States of America, which is the thing that our Founding Fathers feared the most and wanted to prevent the most in the framing of our Constitution, and you would have the Department of Defense displacing offices

such as mayors, and you could have the POTUS, the president of the United States saddled with being the governor or the mayor of some part of our nation at the same time that he or she is trying to be the president of the United States.

People have to very carefully consider and walk through this. In the Pentagon it is not intuitive and it is not a knee-jerk reaction to see Title 32, in other words, federal monies being spent but under the control of the state government as a good thing. But if this is well thought through and the second and third order affects are considered, it is a very wise and prudent way to respond here in the United States.

MR. PUNARO: Great. Thank you.

Admiral Venuto?

ADM. VENUTO: Yes, sir. Well, let me start out by answering the question about how the Coast Guard operates. We are in a unique position in that we have been the nation's maritime first responder for 216 years come this 4th of August. And so this is what we do. We work very, very closely. We have a very decentralized command and control system.

We rely on our two area commanders, one in Atlantic area, the other in Pacific area; and then the district commanders, which are responsible for a number of states to coordinate at the local level. We work with local law enforcement officials, fish and wildlife. We work at the port levels. We work with local emergency planning communities, the harbor safety committees, the area planning committees, the maritime security committees. It goes on and on and on in terms of how we operate on a daily basis.

We respond to tens of thousands of search-and-rescue cases year round. So in a natural disaster, it is just of a larger magnitude for us. So we are in a very unique position in that we can do that. And of course we plan for these things on a regular basis; we drill for them, and we have a very good continuity of operations planned where we will evacuate our units outside of the immediate area of disaster, keep it at the rim and then backfill in just as we did in the Hurricane Katrina operations with headquarters that were moved from New Orleans to St Louis and also Alexandria, Louisiana.

So that is from a Coast Guard perspective. Now, from a little bit larger perspective in terms of a national response: We are going to be much better prepared for a natural disaster this coming hurricane season. I know the Department of Homeland Security and our secretary have worked very hard in terms of developing plans. We have what is called the National Response Plan that was in operation last year but was very, very new, which spells out how the nation will respond to natural and manmade disasters. And of course the secretary of homeland security in an incident of national significance is in charge of executing that plan.

There is two distinctions here: Will federal resources be used in a local situation or regional situation? The answer is yes. The other issue is who is in charge – of course above my pay-grade level as well, but it does not mean that federal resources – if the governor remains in charge, does not mean that federal resources will not be used to address that disaster; it is who is going to kind of coordinate those operations.

Now, under the National Response Plan, there are principal federal officials that the secretary designates that are responsible for coordinating the federal assets that are brought to bear in a particular area of disaster that can work with state and local officials in a coordinated response area. The secretary of Homeland Security has already got several pre-designated principle federal officers to address certain disaster areas. They work with how the Coast Guard connects into that. We work with what is called the joint field office that coordinates those activities just as other federal agencies will.

As you may be familiar, in the National Response Plan, there are 15 different emergency support functions that have been allocated to various agencies. The Department of Defense is designated as a supporting agency for all 15 of those and there are certain coordinating agencies such as the Coast Guard that has got a principal role in search and rescue as you might determine. But there is a much better coordinated effort; there has been much more planning associated with bringing federal resources to bear.

So I think the real important issue is are we better prepared to bring resources to bear to a particular problem and I would say, yes, we are. Who coordinates that is a constitutional and a national issue that, as General Blum points out, has got some significant ramifications altogether.

So I think we are better prepared. The one thing I would like to say in terms of legislation that we put forward in the Department of Homeland Security – as I pointed out to you earlier in my opening comments, the secretary has Title 14 authorities to call up Reservists for 30 days in a four-month period, 60 days within a two-year period. We have legislation right now in the Coast Guard and transportation – Maritime Transportation Act of 2006, which is basically our authorizing legislation, which is cleared conference in both the House and the Senate and is awaiting floor action to expand that authority, to allow the secretary to call up reservists for 60 days, in other words double it, over a four-month period or 120 days over a two-year period.

It also would allow the secretary to actually call up Reservists to prevent or to help mitigate in anticipated natural disaster or an act of terrorism where he could actually call up or she could call up Reservists in anticipation if we had intel or in preparation for a hurricane, rather than letter that hurricane hit and then calling up. We are very efficient at doing that, and Reservists report to duty a day after those things happen ready to go. But it is in anticipation of that.

So those are the kinds of things from a legislative point of view that we have in working and we expect that that will pass both houses of Congress since it's reported at a conference and the president will sign it.

MR. PUNARO: Great. Thanks, that was very helpful.

Commissioner Stump.

GORDON STUMP: Good afternoon. General Lemke, you have mentioned two pieces of legislation, one that we are very much aware of that was dropped on Wednesday. The other piece of legislation would affect something that this commission is looking at, and that changes to Title 10 and Title 32. Part of our mission in life is to at the end of the year make recommendations for legislation which will affect the roles and missions, and pay and benefits of the Guard and Reserve forces.

So I would ask if you could – especially since the Air Force in particular is moving toward a new relationship with the Air National Guard with the blended units of the F-15s, the Joint STARS, the B-2 that was just announced and so forth, and the problems that I know that we have had initially down in Macon, Georgia – so if you could, could you give us an outline of what you foresee that that legislation should be, and also some rationale in why you think that this will be good legislation?

GEN. LEMPKE: You bet. Thank you very much, Gordy. I appreciate the opportunity to talk about that.

I divide the legislative initiative into two areas. One has to do with missions. Quite frankly the language in there right now talks about training in the old classic sense. You do your weekend, you go home, and then some day when the big fight occurs, you're all called up as companies and brigades, and battalions, and so forth, and do your thing. And quite frankly the nature of warfare is changing and quite frankly we have been operating differently than that in many respects for many years.

And so the line between what is training and sometimes what is operational is blurred. And this language now helps, will help to clarify that, which will specifically help us more easily get into missions where the Air Force sorely needs the Guard in space operations, in intel operations, in operating some of the latest technology out there including pilot-less vehicles and so forth. So this legislation will help us, will clarify the language so that we can actually work in those areas. And that is going to be the future of the fight, and that is the future that the National Guard needs to move to.

The other element of this legislation deals more with homeland defense, homeland security. And, again, quite frankly, there is just language in there that when interpreted is restrictive. For example, the use of an AGR, Active, Guard, and Reserve individual, the language dictates that they are allowed to train and operate with their unit.

So I'm – it's difficult in some situations to go in and grab individuals during the week that are already on duty, that are already AGR to go out and conduct a mission. Now, I can do that under life and limb, but that is always a definitional thing. We have similar issues in the use of technicians. So this language will help clean up some of that

so that we can more easily tap our full-time force to operate and support homeland security and homeland defense missions. So it kind of targets updating the language in those two specific areas.

MR. STUMP: Another question, and this is maybe for all of you, from your perspective what capability gaps do you see between the federal, state, and local capabilities in responding to your domestic missions, and what additional authorities or resources do you need to perform more effectively in a crisis situation?

GEN. LEMPKE: That is a good one, Gordy. (Laughter.) And I say that because, again, Katrina has heightened the need for responding to major events and we did that. So as I look back, I say well I'm not so sure there are all that many gaps. But if I were to identify some, one I would say I would go back to the legislation I talked about with Title 32 and really we need to enhance our capability to train with our compadres in the law enforcement area and other areas to help prepare for local emergencies, and I'll give you an example of that.

Not to long ago in Nebraska, we had an exercise where we brought out some of our National Guard folks that we have identified for a quick reaction and had them working with local law enforcement on crowd control. Well, we were able to get away with it under the training rules that we had for that particular unit. But if I look to different directions and the skills required of other units don't match up with this kind of crowd-control training, I would have difficulty justifying that. So things like that that we could tighten up that would allow us to more easily conduct our homeland security training would be very, very helpful to us.

The other area I would also mention would be the quipping area only in the sense that if there is a gap there, we need to make sure that we do have that basic equipment available that General Blum mentioned in the medical, the transportation, the communications, and so forth in the states so that we can indeed step up and do the missions we need for homeland security.

GEN. BLUM: On September 11th and since then, we have identified one, two, three, four, five, about 10 significant gaps that the National Guard Bureau looked at there and said what does DOD have, what does the nation need, and what gaps exist, and here is where they are:

The first thing we found out is we did not have an organization in the National Guard at the grassroots level in every state and territory that could provide situational awareness for this new combatant command northern command which was stood up after 9/11. So we established a joint force headquarters in every state and territory. Those joint force headquarters need to be trained and they need to be exercised. There is no recognition, yet, of that funding requirement and there are no funds identified to do that yet.

The JROC, I'm pleased to say, took that on as recently as two weeks ago, and accepted that a requirement for the first time, five years later. But we're there; we are moving in the right direction. That is a gap that needs to be worked on; we are working on it, and it's getting closed tighter every day.

Deployable joint task force in every state and territory so you have doctrinally trained and a capable force that can go out and pull together a joint interagency taskforce that is not only joint services to include the Coast Guard in every state but five. I mean, if you think of our nation, there are very few states that are so landlocked that they don't have a navigable river or a port, a lake, a gulf, an ocean where they have to rely on the – the Guard is good, but we can't walk on water; the Coast Guard does.

So we need the Coast Guard there, and the maritime forces integrated fully in with the National Guard response, and certainly we want the Marine Corps and the other services, the DOD, integrated. This is the job of Admiral Keating, but we enable Admiral Keating to know what is going on in every zip code of this country because that is where we live and operate.

And we have the scouts out, the eyes and ears out there. So we have to have a joint CONUS communications support environment that enables us to pass CIPERNET, which is secure e-mail for anybody behind me that doesn't know, or NIPERNET, which is non secure, but somewhat shielded e-mail so that we can give them open source information or intelligence or we can provide classified intelligence to Northern Command, and so that they can also share intelligence at the state and local level that would be vital to protect key places. We have established that. We have a good collaborative cooperation with them, and that is now being picked up and recognized as a resource requirement to close that gap.

The National Guard – CBRNE, chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and non-convention explosives response forces were – are force packages of Army, National Guard, and Air National Guard existing units that are needed by the Air Force and Army to do the war fight overseas, that when they are not overseas are available back here at home, we have given them some extra equipment and extra training and put them together in a forced package that when you bring them together, Commissioner Sump, provide the same capabilities that reside in a one-of-a-kind unit here that Indian Head, Maryland, called the United States Marine Corps CBIRF, which is a chemical biological immediate response force.

We only had one of those. We think we need more of those in this nation because these forces and those kind of capabilities – to do mass decontamination, mass casualty treatment, search and rescue, pulling people and identifying them out from under rubble piles and keeping them alive and bringing them out as other than corpses – is very, very important. You need a general security force for that, and you also need an element that can identify and detect agents, whether they be anthrax or whether it's – it might be Sweet'N Low that was spilled in the Mall of America and we don't need to close the mall.

So these civil support teams provide the brains, the identify-and-detect piece, and put together with the rest of the units it is a very capable package that can do mass decontamination, mass casualty extraction, search and rescue, security, identify and detect, and it comes with a very robust communications package that allows a civilian first responders – police, firefighters, emergency service, ambulance drivers to be to use their 800, 900 megahertz systems, and plug in with the DOD National Guard response force or the Coast Guard if it has maritime implications. We have closed that gap and it continues to get tighter every day.

We have set up National Guard response forces that can guard critical installations, do critical infrastructure protection, cordoned off areas. If necessary, we can provide a company a 100-man element roughly in four hours in any part of our nation today. Every single state and territory has one of these, and every single state and territory in the National Guard has a 500-man element, roughly a battalion size that can respond in less than 24 hours – critical gap.

Does the Army and the Marine Corps have rapid reaction forces and quick reaction forces? You bet. You know what their string is? Ninety-six hours. Ninety-six hours sounds short. How many of you want to wait 96 hours for the fire department to show up when your house catches on fire? That is four days. We have got to be able to respond faster than that. Ninety-six hours is a poor metric for homeland defense, support to Homeland Security. It needs to be addressed. We are filling that gap with National Guard forces.

All of these things, if they are going to be effective, are going to have to be trained and exercised, and right now we are doing that out of hide, so we are advocating for recognizing these gap fillers as legitimate DOD capabilities that saved the lives of American people, which I think what most people think the Department of Defense is ultimately charged to do. We have stood these capabilities up. We want to make sure they are resourced to be trained, ready, and exercised because no good team performs well that doesn't practice. We need to practice. The military is very good at training and exercising, but you have to have the funds to do that. So that is a gap that exists that we are still working on.

We will have 12 of these – we have 12 trained and certified CERFPs (ph), which are the response force packages. We are expanding that to 17 at the direction of the Senate or the Congress. We will have 17 of these by the end of the year or additional five, and we have 55 civil support teams, one for each state and two in California, which are authorized, and we currently have 40 that are trained, manned, equipped, and certified, ready to go today, and respond literally every single day around this nation.

These are the critical gaps I think that exist, and the way you close these gaps frankly is we have to have a more robust training and exercise program that someone had got to take responsibility for because when you're talking about responding in the United States of America to anything, it will require a joint interagency, intergovernmental

response so the training and exercise, in this soldier's judgment should be a joint inter-agency, intergovernmental training and exercise. For us to just practice with ourselves doesn't get it done.

We have got to open the aperture up and make sure that we really do have civilian first responders, civilian elected officials, inter-agencies at the state and the federal level there, people from the Department of Homeland Security, and the agencies aligned under them, and the military elements under DOD to include the National Guard, to include Northern Command, the combatant commander here in CONUS, and to include PACOM, frankly, if you're talking about Guam and Hawaii. They need to practice how we are going to do this because in the United States it is a little bit different than anywhere else in the planet because we are bound by a piece of parchment called the Constitution.

So it's the right way to do it, but we are not doing it the right way yet until we really get this joint interagency training and exercise program established. And frankly, the Guard and Reserves play a huge, huge role in that, and I would hope that is included as one of the gaps you identified.

MR. STUMP: Admiral?

ADM. VENUTO: Let me first of all speak to resources. And I will speak to resources in terms of Coast Guard's perspective. And this is not anything that was revealed in Hurricane Katrina, but is essentially where we are as a service because when I talk about the Coast Guard – because we have an integrated Reserve force that are using active-duty equipment as I mention to you earlier.

We have identified – as many of you may know, we own one of the oldest fleets in the world, both aircraft and ships, and we have been about the business over the last four years of capitalizing all of our major sea assets, our ships, our aircraft, and we are in the business of doing that. We have gone through a pretty major acquisition of some of our small-boat community and will continue to do that – our buoy tender community. We have re-engined a lot of our 865 aircraft.

We have an acquisition called rescue 21, which is a re-capitalization of the communications and sensors along the coastal region, also to provide common communications equipment. We have got another acquisition called the Command 2010, which deals with providing the right kinds of command center capabilities, interoperability with both DOD and local communities and law enforcement agencies. So all of those things are underway and are long-term kinds of acquisitions for the Coast Guard that we sorely need. And we are about the business in doing that in cooperation with the Congress, the administration, and the Department of Homeland Security.

In answering to the other question, though, the fundamental question is, is we have existing resources; the question is how do we bring those resources to maximum effect upon the mission – is the real key issue. And from my perspective I think – and these things are being worked on, but interoperable communications is absolutely key to

this. And I know that the Department of Homeland Security and the other agencies are working on this, this is not a small undertaking. Even if you have the right kinds of equipment, if anybody has ever coordinated major operations, getting everybody on the same frequency is a huge undertaking. But that is only magnified when you don't have the same kind of equipment so that you can actually bring all of the resources that you have in the coordinated operations.

Along with those coordinated operations, the National Response Plan has a certain kind of organizational construct, which local governments have used and we have used in responding to oil spills of national significance. It's called the National Incident Command System. And you use the Incident Command System as the organizational construct to respond to a particular event.

And you say, well, okay, that is interesting, but if you don't understand how to plug into an organization – and the organization of DOD is a lot different than the National Incident Command System. Everybody needs to understand how to plug into those organizations that – where do you get logistics? Who do I go to for communications? Who do I go to for supplies? Who do I go to for operations? All of those things are spelled out in the National Response Plan.

So as General Blum indicated, doing exercises – and I know there are efforts involved in doing this. There have been some exercises. You know, the Department of Homeland Security is working very, very closely with NORTHCOM and other agencies to put an exercise schedule together. Until you exercise those, you don't know where you have gaps. So, you know, we can go a long ways as we continue to have people become conversant in what an Incident Command System is and how you plug into it, and then continue to work on common communications.

And I need to correct one thing that my esteemed colleague, General Blum, commented on, is that I don't know if any Coast Guard member that walks on water. (Laughter.) We all need boats to do that, very good boats. The only one that I know walks on water is my wife.

MR. PUNARO: There you go.

MR. STUMP: Just one last question.

MR. PUNARO: All right. Okay. You're way, way over, but go ahead.

MR. STUMP: The White House Katrina report, the "Lessons Learned" indicated that the National Guard should organize and train for a priority mission in support of homeland security. What is your interpretation of this recommendation and what, if any, changes would be needed for the Guard to accomplish the priority mission?

GEN. BLUM: I don't take any exception that we ought to be prepared to perform that priority mission. It is pretty tough to call yourself the National Guard and then say

you're not going to do that. But I don't want that to be viewed in any sense as our exclusive mission. We could not defend this nation with a volunteer force without the National Guard. As a federal reserve of the Army and the Air Force, we don't need to do the homeland support mission or support the homeland security mission at the exclusion of being a full-spectrum-capable force of both the Army and the Air Force.

So everybody understands with that caveat, I agree, but to agree with that and say that is the single mission of the National Guard, that would be a huge, huge step backwards in how we defend this nation.

GEN. LEMPKE: Commissioner Stump, I would say it's simply formalizing what we have been doing for a long time already. I mean, we have done things in all of the states that help us prepare to respond in support of local authorities within our states: training when we can, exercising, and so forth, and now it's just a matter of recognizing that, perhaps funding it a little bit better, and formalizing it.

MR. PUNARO: Okay, Commissioner Rowley.

WADE ROWLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The question is more for General Blum and Lempke, however I think probably the Coast Guard has some participation in this too. In 1988, legislation was passed to provide a mechanism for military support to civil law enforcement. And some of the initiatives that were implemented in the early '90s were JTF-6, which now is converted to Joint Taskforce North and has transition from a counter-drug mission into a homeland security mission. NGB initiated the counter-drug program along with the states, especially the border states.

And I asked a question this morning of Secretary Foresman, how he felt that should be best organized. And although he liked the counter-drug model of how to put a program like that together, he reserved the right to give me an answer to that until after the security border initiative has concluded within the next six months.

So basically two questions I have is, is the Guard and the states planning on transition to more of a homeland-security type organization instead of a counter-drug organization like Joint Task Force North has? And number two, in the SBI process, is the National Guard at the barrel level, as well as the states being provided the visibility and the opportunity to participate in that plan as far as providing support specifically to the Southwest and the North border?

GEN. BLUM: Let me try to address that because I'm not sure I totally understood what you're trying to ask me. You got it right when you said the law was military support to civilian law enforcement. That's why we established these capabilities and these programs. We have been supporting, on the Southwest border, the United States Army, the joint task force that – JTF-6, now JTF-North; the ICE, Immigration Control Enforcement; the Drug Enforcement Agency, DEA; the FBI,

Federal Bureau of Investigation; Border Patrol, and probably other civilian law enforcement organizations, to include the state police or the Texas Rangers or the local sheriffs and police chiefs of the border – the cities that are affected by being proximate to the border.

In addition, we have put intelligence analysts – not collection people and not – people that can do the analysis that the local law enforcement cannot do so that we can assist them in their efforts to make sense of civilian-acquired information, law-enforcement intelligence that doesn't threaten the chain of custody for prosecution, and military intelligence, and pushing that together – that is fused ultimately at the NORTHCOM level by their fusion center – because the Guard doesn't do that. We don't have fusion centers and we don't want them, we're not authorized for that, but all of that is highly, highly useful. But having said all of that, there is no intent to transform the National – what I'm doing is leveraging the go-to-war capabilities and the training and expertise that is resident in the units of the Army and Air Guard and pulling out those specific talent sets that are not being used overseas and using them here at home to in fact provide civilian support to law enforcement. There is no way that I want to configure the National Guard to in fact be an all one-stop-shopping for that because then we have the military doing the civilian law enforcement work, and that I don't think is what our government intends or our people want, and I'm not sure it's a proper role for the United States military and the United States or we risk stop being the United States.

I think we're doing it at an appropriate level in an appropriate fashion, and I will continue to do this. Now we are moving more to counternarcotics/counterterrorism as there is a narcoterrorist nexus identified, and as the threat changes and as the intelligence shows us that we are now facing a different threat, we're making some adjustments in that regard. We're putting systems – ISR systems, surveillance systems – but they are – we operate them but they are under the control of the civilian law enforcement. In fact, many times civilian law – if it's an airplane, civilian law enforcement people fly in them because we are providing the capability that the civilian law enforcement agencies don't have, and probably cannot afford – this nation probably can't afford that kind of duplication of those highly technical capabilities. So we do that, but it's very closely scrutinized. Every mission gets vetted by attorneys, and we're very careful that we don't cross the line to go beyond military law – or to civil law enforcement. It's military support. We're in support of them. We're providing them niche capabilities or niche expertise they don't have, but they remain the law enforcement authority. Now, you don't want the Guard doing law enforcement authority.

MR. ROWLEY: Understood. The reason I asked that question is because in the past, when formerly Joint Task Force 6 operated pretty much as a separate entity, some of the states programs like California Counter-Drug and Texas especially had very large programs, and they weren't always in concert. So you've pretty much answered my question that that will all be encompassed under the umbrella of NORTHCOM.

GEN. BLUM: Now I know where you're going. The short answer is we will do everything we can to nest the state plans with NORTHCOM's plans. To do otherwise I think would not do our country a service.

MR. ROWLEY: Okay, that clarified it for me.

GEN. LEMPKE: I don't know whether this will help your question or not, but let me start with explaining – and since you specifically mentioned counter-drug within a state and the fact that it is a unique kind of unit with a unique kind of mission, and it does have three characteristics that make it a little bit different than what we normally have, and that it is specially organized around a mission that is not necessarily, on the surface, a mission in support of our national defense – i.e., going overseas to fight, although it certainly could. It does have special equipment that it does operate with. And number two – or number three, it does operate much more closely than most of our units in the state with local and state law enforcement. But when you step back and look at what it actually accomplishes for us in the state, it actually provides us, number one, with a regular means of coordinating and working with so that our law enforcement and other agencies are comfortable working with the Guard, so it does support the overall Homeland Security mission, plus providing that level of comfort so that when we call the rest of the forces in, we know how to operate.

The equipment that we use – night vision goggles and so forth – are, again, the same kinds of equipment that we would use if called to duty by other units that may not have that equipment. So it allows us the opportunity to work with other units in the state to help them develop an understanding of use and capabilities of that equipment. So I would say that the counter-drug organization per se is not the way we would organize within the state.

I'll give you another example of something here. For our smallpox plan – distribution – vaccination distribution plan in the state, the state Health and Human Services look to the Guard to provide movement and security for moving doses that would come in under the national package and be distributed to various sites throughout the state of Nebraska. So we had to identify a unit, if you will, to be vaccinated to handle the security aspect of that. Well, we picked the band, and the reason we picked the band was because more than likely they would be one of the latter units that would ever be mobilized. Chances are they're going to be in the state when called.

And so the point here is simply that you can't look to just one model of something to support Homeland Security; the needs are varied. And that's the beauty of the National Guard. We have transportation, we have medical, we have combat, which is security, we have all those capabilities so we're able to reach and touch many different areas of the mission. To try to bring that in and focus it only on one area I think would be a detraction from what we can actually accomplish for our state.

MR. ROWLEY: Okay, yeah, that answered my question. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman?

ADM. VENUTO: Sir, I have nothing to add.

MR. PUNARO: Okay, great. Anything else, Wade?

MR. ROWLEY: No.

MR. PUNARO: Okay, Commander Thompson – or Commissioner Thompson.

ADMIRAL J. STANTON THOMPSON: In all due respect to my good friend and Capstone (sp) classmate, General Blum, and to you, General Lempke, I'm going to move my question into the maritime arena and focus that with you, Admiral, if I could.

MR. PUNARO: I should have said Admiral Thompson when he got the gavel.

ADM. THOMPSON: That's right. The Coast Guard is the lead federal agency with regard to maritime security responsibility, and we've been told that there's at least eight plans that have been developed to support the national strategy for maritime security, and that you guys were kind of a lynchpin in getting all the interagency effort put together with the Department of Homeland Security and DOD and others, and I want to focus on the others just a minute – the other part. As I remember, there are several maritime ports – I mean, there's thousands of them but there are several of those thousands that are considered to be strategic in the interest of our nation, and how do you work with the tags and the governors where those ports are located, and who does what to whom and how, and there used to be a little friction between the Coast Guard and, as I remember, the governors. I got it from the peer-side out and you got it from the peer-side in. Surely there is a little better coordination now.

And then the second question I have for you, sir, is under your Title 14 authorities, can the governor go to the district commander of the Coast Guard and say, I need these things, and the district commander of the Coast Guard says, you've got them, or is there some kind of a requesting format within the Department of Homeland Security similar to the Department of Defense where it has to go to a secretarial-level decision tree to get those assets provided?

ADM. VENUTO: Okay, to your first question, sir, we work very, very closely – there are actually 361 ports in the United States and there is a stratified security regime that we have worked with, both with the Navy and the Department of Defense, the Department of Homeland Security, et cetera, in terms of our regime for protecting those ports. But we work very, very closely – our sector commanders, our captains of the port work very, very closely with local officials and the committees that I talked to you about – the port security committees, the port safety committees, regional directors – to coordinate security operations, any type of those kinds of operations.

So, you know, in terms of an event in the port that our captains of the port and our sector commanders and the district commander would work very, very closely with local officials to address the issue.

ADM. THOMPSON: How dependent are you on the National Guards of those states to carry out your responsibility of a lead agency of maritime security?

ADM. VENUTO: Well, since we are responsible really for the coastline out, and in the port, we do have certain law enforcement extended authorities to shoreline as long as there is a nexus with the water, but principally if it's land, it's the responsibility of local law enforcement officials, and if the governor activated the National Guard under Title 32, we would just coordinate whatever operations we had with the National Guard, and I really don't see that there would be a major conflict involved in that. So there are other agencies within the Department of Homeland Security – you know, customs and ICE and so forth – actually, Customs and Border Protection and Immigration and Customs Enforcement are the proper long titles for that – that coordinate as well.

So from a Coast Guard perspective, I don't think that we've run into major issues associated with how we coordinate our law enforcement efforts or our security efforts with local authorities, and if the police happen to have a boat out there that they're patrolling with, we coordinate with them, and we've had virtually, you know, not real significant problems associated with that.

ADM. THOMPSON: And then to my question about your authorities under Title 10 –

ADM. VENUTO: Sure.

ADM. THOMPSON: – to provide Coast Guard resources, particularly reserve capabilities. What process do you use to deliver that?

ADM. VENUTO: Okay. Well, first of all, our district commanders – if a governor comes to our district commander and asked to do certain kinds of maritime security operations, we would look at those and – he has the discretion to provide Coast Guard resources to a particular type of security operations with a maritime nexus. If it's designated an incident of national significance where then it's something that comes under the control of the secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, he designates a principal federal officer, our Coast Guard district commander, just as they have done for many, many years, would report through that chain, but if there were things that were of a Coast Guard nature, they could provide – he could provide various resources just ensuring that the principle federal officer understood that those resources were going to be provided.

So it's just a – but if it is an incidence of national significance, the district commander's principal responsibility at that point, if it is associated with that incident, is to coordinate through the principal federal official, and they would negotiate how they

coordinate with the governor. But the principal federal official would be responsible principally for coordinating with the governor. If it's a mayor or something like that – I mean, you have to be careful what incident you're talking about. If it's not an incident of national significance, then the district commander has wide authorities. If it is an incident of national significance where a principal federal officer has been designated to take care of the incident, the Coast Guard would work through that, but they would negotiate resources with the governor, but it would be through the principal federal officer to do that – principally, not necessarily, depending upon what the situation is.

As far as providing reservists, that's a different story. As I said before, the secretary has the authority to call up reservists for natural disasters, terrorists, manmade or natural disasters, or terrorist activities, but those forces would just be under the district commander and would look just like active-duty forces, so there would be no difference. But a governor couldn't come to a district commander and say, look, I'd like you to call up some reservists to take care of this. That would have to be worked with the Department of Homeland Security.

ADM. THOMPSON: Okay.

ADM. VENUTO: Is that –

ADM. THOMPSON: Yes, you're right there.

GEN. BLUM: Commissioner Thompson, if I could, I can give you a real-live example. I was, for several years, the assistant adjutant general for the state of Maryland, commander of the Army National Guard in Maryland and had responsibility for the Counter-Terrorism Task Force by the governor of Maryland. There is a very important port in Maryland called Baltimore. There are some critical defense infrastructure places in Baltimore that were the responsibility of the National Guard to defend for DOD. I could not defend adequately those facilities that were located in the Port of Baltimore without the cooperation, coordination, and support of the United States Coast Guard. The United States Coast Guard, even though it was a port, did not have jurisdiction in the entire port of Baltimore. It was shared jurisdiction. The fire department had a piece of it. The mayor owned it, not the governor. The mayor actually owns the political boundaries of the Port of Baltimore, not the governor of Maryland.

So the Coast Guard was really working in support of the mayor and in support of the National Guard, which was doing their job in support of the Department of Defense, which required the cooperation and coordination of the Baltimore City Police Department, which had police boats and jurisdiction and law enforcement for certain portions of the harbor; the fire marshal, who had fire boats and law enforcement authority for certain portions of the harbor; the United States Coast Guard, which had all of the rest of the harbor, and it was done in a superbly magnificent, seamless manner, and that's where I learned – and this is the model that I think should be studied for joint interagency, intergovernmental taskforce approach to how we defend our country here at home and we support the Department of Homeland Security when the military is called to

do that, whether it's the Guard or the Reserves or the active or any elements of uniformed services. They've got to learn two words: supported and supporting.

The Coast Guard never worried about who was in charge; they worried about what needed to be done. And we didn't talk about command and control. We knew Schaefer was the mayor and we were all there to support him in terms of what he needed being done and each of us had a sector and responsibilities. The Coast Guard could not do the ground pursuit without the National Guard. They could, but it's very awkward – pretty tough, you know, come dockside, jump out of the boat and go chasing people down the street, and then pretty soon you're out of your jurisdiction and then you can't do what you need to do, and frankly you really don't have the kind of support you need without us.

So to answer your question, it has got to be a fully integrated, joint interagency, intergovernmental approach to this. It doesn't happen by accident. We trained, we exercised; we didn't exchange business cards on the day we had to defend that place. So you are hitting on the very essence of – there is no command and control; it was coordination and communication. There was no who's in charge; it's who supported and who is supporting with what capability. And it was very clear who was in charge in the city of Baltimore; it was the mayor, a guy named William Donald Schaeffer, and even the government didn't come into that.

ADM. THOMPSON: Thank you.

MR. PUNARO: Commissioner Lewis, you had something you wanted to get a clarification on?

PATRICIA LEWIS: If I could just clarify, I appreciate the description of Baltimore, and I'm a Maryland resident so I understand a little bit of that, but just to clarify, Admiral Venuto, what agency has the overall responsibility for ensuring that coordination and collaboration for port security? Is it the Coast Guard? I know a lot of people play in that but somebody's got to pull them all together. Is it a Coast Guard responsibility – is port security a Coast Guard responsibility?

ADM. VENUTO: Port security is a Coast Guard responsibility, but, again, you know, there are jurisdictional issues that the general pointed out that are very complex. From a federal point of view, the Coast Guard is the executive agent for the secretary of Homeland Security under the national strategy for homeland security. The secretary for the Department of Homeland Security has got responsibility for the maritime region. The Coast Guard is the secretary's executive agent for that. Our captains of the port are responsible to coordinate with state, local and federal officials to ensure the security of that port region and that maritime region from a district commander's point of view.

But to say that there is one person in charge gets to be a complicated question because, as the general pointed out, the mayor of the city is going to want to be responsible. And I appreciate his comment about what the Coast Guard does, and he is

exactly right. We don't care who is in charge; we just care that the mission gets done, and if we're responsible for it, we will take charge. If we are not, we will support the individual in charge to the best of our capability.

So, again, you know, these things are very complicated and you get down to the local issues. There's not one model necessarily fits all because, from a jurisdictional point of view, there's lots of things that come into play. But we certainly defer to the mayor and the governor in these situations where they have responsibility. If it is a federal law enforcement issue, we then take charge of that particular responsibility. But in coordinating things, it's a little bit different.

MS. LEWIS: We heard a good deal this morning about unity of effort and unity of command, and we understand and recognize the difference in the requirements for collaboration and cooperation. I just wanted to have some idea who was somewhat responsible overall for port security in pulling all those pieces together, and I think you've said it in the Coast Guard –

ADM. VENUTO: Right.

MS. LEWIS: – so thank you.

MR. PUNARO: And, I mean, these are very – everybody – all the witnesses know how critically important this is because people exploit seams. And if you're a freighter coming from Hong Kong and you aren't in the 12-mile limits, customs and some other folks in the U.S. Navy may be worried. Once you get a little bit closer into that port – maybe the Coast Guard – once you dock at that dock and you start offloading that cargo and putting it on a truck container, other federal and local agencies – and I mean, there are seams in all of that, so I mean, it's – and you can't operate with seams. You've got to have – when it comes to security, you have to have a seamless operation. So that's one of the things we try to get at in terms of homeland defense, homeland security.

Okay, Commissioner Stockton.

DONALD L. STOCKTON: Good afternoon. First of all, thank you all for being here today and bringing your advice and counsel to us, and for all the things that you do, and especially for your leadership of the reserve components that are under your command or your advice.

I'd like to focus, Admiral, just for a moment on personnel issues. You mentioned the integration of the Coast Guard Reserve, and of course that initiative started probably 10 years or so ago. And do you – I have two questions for you. Do you have an integrated personnel and pay system, and if so, how efficiently does the system handle the migration from the RC to the AC status? And then second, what challenges still exist for the Coast Guard in this area?

ADM. VENUTO: We do have an integrated – there are degrees of integration. And I hate to put qualifiers on it, but all of our reservists are paid out of the Pay and Personnel System and the same software system that we use for our active duty members at Topeka, Kansas, from that point of view. But reserves have a particular challenge in the kinds of – there are a huge number of personal transactions that have got to occur with the reservist that doesn't have to occur with an active-duty member. You bring an active-duty member on one time, you pay them, they get promoted, they change duty stations, they get different BAH – their basic allowance for housing – et cetera, et cetera, but basically you have very few transactions associated with that. With a reservist, you have lots of transactions. You bring them on active duty – you know, you bring them on active duty for training. If you bring them on active duty like we do voluntarily under what we call ADSW – active duty special work – you might bring them on for that. If you recall them, you bring them on for that. It depends on where they're at.

So there are lots of different transactions. On a transaction-for-transaction basis, we do very, very well in that category with a minimum amount of errors. Did we have personnel errors associated with pay issues in the large recall to active duty associated with 9/11 because we called up 4,450 – over half of our reservists? Yes, we had some errors, but all those errors were corrected within a very short period of time, usually within about a two-month period, and we had special pay transactions to take care of that.

But our error rate for reservists is very low. It's higher than the active duty but that's because of the way the transactions occur. For instance, if you recalled the reservist – because it's all local – and you told them to report to – you told them to report to Gulfport, Mississippi and they ended up reporting in at Mobile, Alabama to activate themselves, that transaction themselves caused a pay error because it was a different location, different pace, et cetera, et cetera. If they came on active duty at a different time than they were told, because they end up reporting, if you came on early you didn't get paid quickly enough because we hadn't put in the advanced transaction. So there are a number of things that cause pay errors with reservists.

But we do have a very integrated and automated pay system for a reservist. There are still challenges associated with it because it's a human system that operates it, but I'm very pleased at where we're at, and we are in the process of even upgrading our system that will even become better, but it is very integrated.

MR. STOCKTON: Thank you. Generals, the Guard, over the last four years or five years now, has been called upon frequently for both overseas and domestic missions. Is the Guard overstressed? And looking at some of the models that we've been talking about about one on and five or six off, or something like that, is there a breaking point at some point? And then secondly, should the Guard – the National Guard shift its focus away from the overseas deployment missions and concentrate more on domestic security?

GEN. BLUM: I can give you two short answers: no and no. And our pay system is screwed up – (laughter) – and it's the most complicated mess you ever saw, frankly.

We get through it. We do an amazing job basically bypassing the system to get the troops paid. This commission really needs to look at simplifying the pay system. There are big companies that make big profits that have lots of people working for them all around the planet that have part-time employees and fulltime employees and they don't have this problem, and we don't need to be waiting five years to get an automated pay system that allows somebody to – and by the way, our system has evolved over 50 years. Every time they decide what they want the Army or the Air Guard or Reserve component to do or be, they make an incremental change to this system, so it gets worse and worse and worse each time they doctor with it. We need to scrap it. We need to go to one pay system, in my judgment, for the Army and one pay system for the Air Force. And then whether you're Air Force Reserve or Army National Guard or Air Guard, it doesn't matter, or active duty, they ought to be able to figure out how to pay their fulltime and part-time people, especially now that we're an operational force.

The old pay system was set up is we're going to have this system when you're not called and then we'll mobilize you and you'll be in our system. Well, we're in and out of the system so often in so many different ways – just like his reservists – that we need to – this commission I would love to address that; it needs addressing.

Do you want to say anything, Roger?

GEN. LEMPKE: First, also with a quick comment on the personnel and pay system, I agree fully with General Blum, and I might also add that when we mobilize a unit, we actually end up having two units. There is a unit back home that stays home that is still responsible for making sure that promotions occur, are sequenced properly for our folks that are Title 10 and overseas because the promotion system still has to work its way through the Guard system. And we also deal with pay issues because we don't have anybody overseas understanding how the Guard works to take care of those issues, which feeds back a moment to the issues that were expressed earlier about fulltime support. It isn't a matter of an entire unit picking up and moving in toto overseas and losing all contact. We still conduct operations in the state. We still have a unit in the state. It's still recruiting and it still has to take care of the members that are overseas. So it is an area that needs to be worked.

With regard to the question with regard to stress breaking point and mission. Overstressed, no; stressed, I think we would all agree that we are. And just to use Nebraska as an example, we have mobilized, deployed about 80 percent of our force over the last four years. In about the next 18 months, virtually every unit within the state will have been mobilized. And when you take a look at two years and five, there is a gap in there; there is a period of time in there where, at least from Nebraska's point of view, we won't have very many to support a new contingency somewhere else. But a part of that, stress, really is knowledge of how we're going to be used – back to the operational reserve. The RFORGEN (ph), with a timing factor to it, is an important element to helping to ease that stress. It's not so much always the fact that we're being called to serve, but the fact of the uncertainty that goes with that service and the length of that

service. So we definitely need to keep moving down the road of a successful RFORGEN model.

And finally, with regard to mission and so forth, men and women join the National Guard because they want to serve our country. They also like to serve our state, and it's a selling point we use in our recruiting. I don't know if I could recruit soldiers and airmen simply to serve the state. And the skills that we train them from basic right on through their MOS skill, whatever that might be, and on into continuity training serve both purposes very well. And to back away from our commitment to the total defense of this nation, the tags would all agree with me, that would be a huge mistake. It would be a morale buster and it would be a loss of a significant and cost-effective resource to our national leaders in total.

MR. STOCKTON: Yes, Admiral?

ADM. VENUTO: I just wanted to make sure – I wanted to clarify. We do not have a seamless personnel system with respect to reserve and active duty. We did not have near the issues that the Department of Defense had in terms of the activation. We have a fairly – we have an automated system, but we have improvements that we need to make and we understand those improvements, where we need to go to make it better, but we're not where we need to be, just so you understand when I mentioned integration, it's not seamless; it still takes a lot of transactions and a great deal of knowledge, but we're a little bit better off.

MR. STOCKTON: You'll still have an opportunity for improvement, in other words.

ADM. VENUTO: Always.

MR. STOCKTON: Okay, one other thing then. This commission has received a lot of testimony about equipment issues, especially with respect to the RC, and in the absence of adequate equipment tracking system, how can the Army's modernization plans address the needs of the National Guard? And then secondly, in your personal opinion, what changes in current mechanisms for equipping the National Guard would you suggest for the future? Generals?

GEN. BLUM: I think the Army is probably making the best good-faith effort at providing the resources and equipping the National Guard overseas. It has never been done better in the history of our nation. We have never sent Army soldiers to war, whether they're active Guard or Reserve, better equipped than they are today, and the best part of it is you cannot tell – in every previous conflict you could almost tell what component they came from by what they look like, by what they were wearing on their back and what kind of equipment they carried. I defy anybody to look at a newsreel, television coverage, or go visit the theater in person and tell me, without asking, if you can tell if they're active Guard and reserve by their equipment. You can't. Better yet, you can't tell by their performance.

So they've never been better led, better trained, better prepared and better equipped for what we're asking them to do overseas. I wish I could say the same here at home, but I can't. And the Army now recognizes that we have paid an unintended price by doing exactly what we should do for our young men and women going in harm's way, and that's equipping them the way I just described. But to do that, for the last four-and-a-half years we've cross-leveled or borrowed from Peter to pay Paul, or robbed Peter to pay Paul and left it in theater in a lot of cases, and they now realize that we're at a critical level with the equipment that we need back here at home to train with as these experienced people come back to maintain their interest and keep their skills honed for the next time they're needed to be called, to keep the interest and have the equipment available for the new recruits to come in to stay with us and stay as motivated – I mean, these are magnificent young men and women, but – that's the good news. The bad news is you've got to – you've really got to meet their expectations, and they expect to have top-line of equipment and they expect to have it in their hands when they come to training so that they are doing relevant, realistic training.

Thirdly, the governors expect that the National Guard has that equipment because it takes three things to deliver a capability: soldiers, or people, personnel; training, so that the people that show up have specific skill sets; but then they have to have the equipment, otherwise – just for an example, call up an engineer battalion and you'll have 500 superbly trained people, but if you don't have bulldozers and loaders and graders and backhoes and all of the – and hand tools and all of the rest of the things that you need, then they can't clear debris from an airfield, they cannot clear roads, they cannot recover people that are in collapsed buildings. I mean, the equipment is a very important element of the capability, and we've promised the governors, and they've been magnificent in – all 54 governors all across this nation, regardless of their politics, have been extraordinarily supportive of their citizen soldiers and have very generously shared their time, talent, and in some cases, spilled their blood for this nation, and we owe it to them to be partners in this and live up to our obligation.

Now, I will tell you that the United States Army leadership is committed to making that happen, and they have \$21 billion in the program right now for the Army National Guard to reequip and refurbish the equipment that has either been lost, become obsolete because of time, been worn out or destroyed in theater, or have to be left over there for an indefinite period of time where we'll never see it again anyway. So they recognize this, and frankly there's another \$2 billion in there for Army aviation modernization, which – now, I'm talking \$20 (billion), \$24 billion that is in the POM, that is in the program of record that if it is not – if it survives over the course of the FYDP, and if it's not meddled with and diverted for other reasons and other priorities, then I think the National Guard – the Army National Guard in particular, will probably be the best-equipped Army National Guard five years from now than it's been in the history in its total existence. The period from today until five years from now is going to be a critical time, and we're going to have to – we're going to have to manage that very, very closely to make sure that if Nebraska gets hit with a tornado and its engineer unit comes

back from Iraq or Afghanistan, it has engineer equipment to go out and help out in recovery operations and search operations to save lives.

I think the senior leadership of the Army – the secretary, the chief of staff, and the vice chief of staff – I think they may even have testified before you. I hope you got the sense of commitment from them that they're taking this serious, but I don't want anybody to have the expectation that next week this is going to get fixed. It will take several years.

GEN. LEMPKE: I'd like to address your question from two different perspectives. One is a technical perspective, which is simply that of transitioning from a concept where you have the equipment, you trained with the equipment, and when the time came you took the equipment and you brought it home with you. Obviously that will not be the concept of operations in the future, as demonstrated in OIF. And so there is a technical requirement out there for the Army working with the National Guard to develop ways so that we can track that equipment and get it back to its rightful owners, if you will. I consider that mainly a technical issue, but there is also an issue dealing with the commitments that have been made to get the Guard the equipment that it needs to bring itself up to a level for supporting the fight overseas and homeland security. Is that going to happen? Can we take off the qualifiers and say, well, if we get everything, if the money is all there, if it all flows the right way?

The National Guard Empowerment Act, that legislation that was recently put forward, addresses fencing of funding so that to assure that the National Guard does get the equipment that is needed for both the fight away and the promises made here at home to our governors. Granted, fencing is a radical concept. It's not one that we probably should easily engage, but I think at this particular issue, when you deal with dual-use force, it's a necessary thing that needs to be discussed.

MR. STOCKTON: One more question. This commission has heard testimony about perhaps the vice-commander at NORAD should be a reserve RC member. What would you think about the commander being – the NORTHCOM commander being a reservist? General Blum?

GEN. BLUM: I don't want to talk about that position specifically, but I will tell you that we've now sent almost 30 general officers to war. They have one year of combat experience. We've never had a force like that in the National Guard in the history of the Guard. That's Army and Air National Guard general officers. They go to the same school as the active duty officers do, they are required to adhere to the same standards as the active-duty officers are expected to adhere to, they have the operational experience in depth that we never had before. In my judgment, any secretary of Defense would be not serving himself well not to consider all of the human talent, whether it's active Guard or reserve, for any position that he needed to fill with competent military professionals.

GEN. LEMPKE: Two comments about the question – answering the question. First, the continental United States I think I would consider a very special area of operations, different than CENTCOM, different than Europe, different than Asia, different than the Pacific. And I believe it's been common to suit the talents of the commanders, the COCOMs that are going to be in those areas with the needs of the area. That's what gives you your most effective command. I think the same is needed at NORTHCOM, so whether you talk to the vice commander or the commander at NORTHCOM – and again, I will be a little more restrictive. I won't say reservist; I'll be a little more direct. I will say National Guard because the experience that, as General Blum alluded to – which is a combination of combat but also working within that AOR, the state and the community, is vital to the overall effectiveness of the command of NORTHCOM. I think the commanders so far of NORTHCOM – General Eberhardt, followed by Admiral Keating, have done a superb job of shaping the mission and getting NORTHCOM moving in the right direction. I do believe that it needs the input at high levels, at a leadership level, of exactly how to integrate now that direction and that organization with the states and with local communities throughout our nation.

MR. PUNARO: Okay, as we switch to Commissioner McKinnon, let me get a clarification, General Blum, when you said that you felt like the pay system ought to be scrapped. Are you talking about the DIMRS (ph) system they've been working on since the early '90s?

GEN. BLUM: If the DIMRS system can deliver on the expectations as they've been advertised in a timely fashion – in other words, somewhere in the near horizon in terms of years, then DIMRS may be the solution, but we need to have a system that allows a fulltime soldier and a part-soldier to receive pay with a seamless way of doing that. If I perform duty 30 days a month, I should get paid for 30 days a month. If I performed duty for two or three days a month, that's what I would expect to be compensated for. We shouldn't have to go through the machinations and the workarounds we go through every time that somebody answers the call to colors for their nation or their state, and then we go through this very convoluted process to figure out what – if I told you how many pay codes and how many different pay entries there are for a soldier in the Army National Guard, and the types of duty, you would not believe it. In fact, I'm not sure I know all of them, but it exceeds 50. And each one of them has nuances and difficulties associated with them going from one status to the next, so look at all –

MR. PUNARO: Is DIMRS is going to fix that?

GEN. BLUM: It is supposed to, but the proof will be when they deliver DIMRS and we see how well it performs. So far, all I see DIMRS doing is getting pushed down the road further and further out.

MR. PUNARO: Well, you almost had me in your amen chorus because they've been telling us that DIMRS is going to be ready since 1990 and this is 2006, so you've got that one for action in your subcommittee, Patty.

Commissioner McKinnon.

DAN MCKINNON: I've got a couple questions for each of you. Admiral, to start with, what's the manpower of the Coast Guard today?

ADM. VENUTO: We have 41,000 active duty members. We have 8,100 reservists – CELRES (ph). We have another 4,000 – a little bit over 400 – 4,400 reserves in what's called the Individual Ready Reserves, which is not a drilling status. We have a little bit over 7,000 civilian personnel, and we have another 1,500 non-appropriated funds people that run our exchange system and our MWR activity.

MR. MCKINNON: Are you maxed out on your authorized manpower?

ADM. VENUTO: We're maxed out on our funded manpower. We're virtually full up in our workforce. Our active-duty officer corps is full up. Our enlisted corps is full up, our chief warrant officer corps. Our reserve – our CELRES is fundamentally filled up. We currently today have about 8,020 drilling reservists, but I have a number of drilling reservists that are on short-term contracts that we don't count against our drilling billet – about 350 of them that easily transfer in and out of that 8,100.

MR. MCKINNON: The bottom line is you don't have a recruiting problem.

ADM. VENUTO: No, sir.

MR. MCKINNON: On port security, did the –

ADM. VENUTO: We have recruiting challenges. The reserve force is a challenge for us to recruit to, and the reason being is because it's a local force. We have small – you know, we have a small number of reservists spread out all over the United States, and so when we recruit a reserve force, we recruit to a very specific need. If I need a boatswain mate, which drives boats, I need to recruit somebody that's interested in a boatswain mate rating so that I can change – they have to be trained to do that. So it gets to be – it's a challenge but we are able to meet our numbers.

MR. MCKINNON: Okay, on port security, did the Coast Guard take a stand on this recent flap over foreign ownership of operation of ports.

ADM. VENUTO: That's not really in my line of work, so I don't – I really couldn't answer you.

MR. MCKINNON: I didn't ask your opinion. Did the Coast Guard take a stand on it is the question.

ADM. VENUTO: The Coast Guard provided its input to the secretary of Homeland Security as they made the decision to vet the decision.

MR. MCKINNON: Okay. On your deep-water project with renewing your fleet, is there any way to accelerate that?

ADM. VENUTO: We have been working with the Congress and the administration to see avenues in which we can provide the most capability we can as quickly as we can. There have been a number of planning proposals that we have worked with the administration and Congress. Right now we're funded at just about a billion dollars a year to recapitalize that fleet, and so we continue to work that. It takes a much larger amount of money to accelerate it, but I know that our commandant is working with the secretary of Homeland Security, the Office – OMB, and the Congress to do all that we can to maximize the dollars that we get allocated to the recapitalization of the fleet.

MR. MCKINNON: All right. General Blum, it's been a pleasure to deal with you here recently. You're certainly not a shy fellow. You're candid and blunt and articulate and forceful in everything you believe, and so it's a pleasure to have you here. I've got a few questions. Is the National Guard part of the Army?

GEN. BLUM: The National Guard is an essential part of the United States Army, and what we need to do, and what this commission I think needs to do, is to make sure that the United States Army and the National Guard and the Army Reserve do everything that is humanly possible to fully integrate both the active with their two reserve components, the Army National Guard and the Army Reserve. We moved from apartheid to separate but equal, and now we need to move to fully integrated. We are partially integrated but it's not totally integrated yet. We're moving each day closer to that and we need to move there faster, not slower.

MR. MCKINNON: What's your opinion about whether – actually I guess that your job should become one of the Chiefs of Staff?

GEN. BLUM: Well, my position is –

MR. MCKINNON: Your personal opinion is what I'm after.

GEN. BLUM: Well, I'd really rather not render that, but I will give you my personal opinion in one thing. I don't think the National Guard needs to be a stand-alone, separate service. And –

MR. MCKINNON: Should it have a separate line item for funding a la Navy or Air Force or Marines – (cross talk) – National Guard?

GEN. BLUM: Well, we get all of our funding right now from the Air Force to train, organize and equip the Air National Guard, and we get all of our funding for the Army National Guard through the United States Army. There is really nothing that we train, organize and equip in a train-organize-and-equip piece that is peculiar to the National Guard. What I think the issue really is at hand is that we have to make sure

we're adequately represented when the resources are apportioned, and when resources decisions are made, we need to be part of that decision making because there are second- and third-order effects that, in the spirit of candor and honesty, are blind spots. This is not malice; this is – I don't – these are not evil people trying to eliminate 38 percent of their total capability, or 42 percent of their combat capability, or 40 percent of their combat support capability, or 34 percent of their combat service support capability. I mean, if they got rid of us, it would be like cutting off their right arm and their right leg.

So it's not an intention to do that, but they have a blind spot, the Army, when it comes to a lot of the missions and requirements and capabilities that we've been discussing here today. Heretofore that has not been anything the United States Army has had to pay much attention to, frankly, and now with the world changing and the threat changing and moving to an asymmetric threat, the senior leadership is beginning to get a much clearer picture that this is something that must be considered and that they have equities in this that they never had before. Just because the head of the snake knows that doesn't mean that the pig that goes through the digestive system isn't going to take some wild curves going through there, and right now we've got to make sure that whole big institution understands that there is goodness in the dual role of their reserve component called the Army National Guard, and that when the National Guard is in service to the states, they are literally protecting – protecting the active duty Army from being diverted from their primary mission and resources being diverted from that – unprogrammed resources being diverted to that at the least convenient time.

Let me give you an example. There are people that think that I have a problem with the 82nd Airborne being called up for Katrina. I don't. The president of the United States ordered in the active duty forces. The 82nd was available and they were called. My point is I want the 82nd at Fort Bragg ready go to do a forced-entry capability, to parachute in at night so that depots around the world don't sleep well at night knowing the 82nd Airborne is walking around in New Orleans knocking on doors that somebody else could be doing. Do you understand what I'm saying?

MR. MCKINNON: Absolutely.

GEN. BLUM: I want them to worry that where's the 82nd tonight, and I don't want the 82nd, which is a unique, one-of-a-kind forced-entry-capability unit diverted to do hurricane relief unless you've exhausted other forces that could do that mission but cannot jump into places that we want to keep wondering if we're coming tonight or tomorrow night.

MR. MCKINNON: You recognize we're at war, and to have the 82nd go elsewhere or to have you properly equipped – and my understanding is, from some briefings the other day, that you're about 37 percent of what you think you need to run the Guard in they way of equipment, and maybe 10 percent of that is not very workable or 30 years old, so you've got a real equipment problem. You talk about going out to the POM, which is about, what, 2012, something like that – I don't think you're going to get your money in the sort of end of the time period loaded up. I'm just wondering why

there isn't more of – it doesn't seem to me to have an urgency that you ought to have to get that stuff in as quickly as you can and get it replenished and resupplied. You're sending all your stuff overseas so you don't have as much to work with.

GEN. BLUM: Well, sir, there is certainly an urgency on my part, and there is certainly an urgency on the part of the governors, and there is certainly an urgency on the part of the adjutants general, and there is certainly an urgency on the part of the National Guard commanders that are back here at home. I explained why that condition occurred. The National Guard is not the only part of the Army that's under-equipped. The Army itself has an equipment problem. My problem is more acute because I started deeper in the well than they did. But I am not alone in this. The active Army and the Army Reserve is under-equipped today. Frankly, you have to remember that this was a national military strategy for over four decades to not fully equip the National Guard, to not give it first-line equipment, to treat it as a strategic reserve where we would have plenty of time to build up the force, train the people and equip the people, procure the equipment, get it in the hands of the soldiers. It is a flawed – well, it's flawed today in the light of today's threat, but in the past it was a very well thought out methodology, but we have been way too slow as a nation to recognize the change that the National Guard and Reserve component went through, and as we moved – we ended the draft over 30 years ago. We didn't make too many changes, frankly. We still have lots of our policy regulations and governing documents that are based on that.

The National Guard is still set up in a 1947 construct. We were completely left out of Goldwater-Nichols. We are woefully – our policy programs, regulations, and statutes significantly need revision to bring us up to the modern date, and with that goes the resourcing strategy and the resourcing process that were all still built for Cold War and they were still built for a much slower, evolving defense environment than we're facing today. Today is fast-moving. We're facing an enemy that is agile and adaptive. And our processes and our resources need to also be adjusted for that. Our policies, programs, authorities and resources for the Guard and Reserve need to be readdressed to recognize they're not an operational reserve; they're an operational force. I mean, when I've sent 39 brigade combat teams, or their equivalent, to combat – almost 270,000 American citizens – citizen-soldiers who have gone to war, okay, in the last four-and-a-half years, 178,000 of them remarkably stayed with us, which means my force right now, the Army National Guard force today, has over 50 percent combat veterans. That is huge. That is an awesome – that is the most capable manpower we've ever had. Now we've got to catch the equipment up with that wonderful human capital that is trained in the combat experience so that we have the capability I described earlier.

This nation is going to be calling on us absolutely more and more and more in the future, not less and less and less. We're not going back. This is never going back to a strategic reserve. We're fighting a very determined enemy, we have a very dangerous world out there, and we have finite defense resources and we don't have a draft. We're going to have to get the most out of our volunteer force. That means we're going to have to optimize how we use our Guard and Reserve day to day. That's why this word “fully integrated” is what I really mean – fully integrated. We have got to make that a seamless

part-time, fulltime force where you can flow from one to the other and back to the other as necessary. Otherwise the volunteer force itself becomes at risk.

MR. MCKINNON: That's what I'm trying to push you for is to be sure you've got the equipment. Now, will you supply to the commission your thoughts and ideas in writing of what you think ought to be changed in the way of legislation that you were just talking about?

GEN. BLUM: I'm not so sure it's legislation as it is policy, but –

MR. MCKINNON: Okay, well, whatever policies –

GEN. BLUM: General Lempke has a different opinion than I do, and I'm sure he's willing to share it, but –

MR. MCKINNON: We'll get to him, but I just want to be sure we get your information and your ideas.

GEN. BLUM: My opinion is if I've got the commitment of the secretary of the Army and the chief of staff of the Army, if that isn't good enough for me, I've got to get in a different line of work.

MR. MCKINNON: Well, the Congress put the commission together to try to get as many ideas as we could.

GEN. BLUM: I understand, sir, but I'm a uniformed soldier. I'm supposed to trust those gentlemen with my life. I hope I can trust them with my wallet. (Laughter.)

MR. MCKINNON: Before we get to General Lempke, just one other – I understand that you know there's a lot of cross-leveling going on, and in a normal company, if one part of your company gives something else to another company, you keep close track of it so you know what your inventory is, and I've heard stories that maybe the Guard doesn't have a complete about where everything is and have it signed off. It went to the regular Army, it didn't get signed off and the paperwork didn't – so you don't have a good tracking system.

GEN. BLUM: Well, let me be accurate with you. I'll tell you the truth on this. We have an extraordinarily good tracking system of what we have. I know what we have. I know what we gave up. I don't know where the hell it is or if it's every coming back or who's going to get it next, but I know what I have now and I know what I gave up, and I know what I once had and what I don't have. I mean, that I do know. I don't know what's become of it once I gave it to the person that it was given to because that's –

MR. MCKINNON: Or when you're going to get it back either.

GEN. BLUM: Exactly. And that's fair and honest and accurate.

MR. MCKINNON: Okay, and that goes for what General Lempke was talking about earlier. If you don't have equipment, how can you have a good fighting force, or a helpful force domestically, whatever?

GEN. LEMPKE: It affects training and of course it also affects response internally.

MR. MCKINNON: I want to get to training with you because you brought it up a moment ago about the importance of training and about the 39 days. How far can you stretch out training from 39 – because the much more complicated equipment you're dealing with today, it's a more complicated world that you've got a lot of things to deal with – how much more can you stretch it out from 39 days till you reach a point of no return on your recruitment or retention?

GEN. LEMPKE: Well, number one, Commissioner McKinnon, we've been operating beyond 39 days for quite a long time. If you take a look at officer professional development, you can't do that in 39 days of normal training. So almost every element of our force is involved with some sort of training that will probably take them away and outside of the 39-day model at multiple times in their career. So you're not talking 39 days a year in reality; you're talking 39 plus other items of training that go on that our soldiers are able to break away and participate in. You know, that –

MR. MCKINNON: But you talked about the need for additional training, so I'm trying to figure out –

GEN. LEMPKE: Well, actually, I didn't talk –

MR. MCKINNON: – what should that be?

GEN. LEMPKE: Yeah, I didn't actually talk for the need of additional training in terms of those 39 days. What I did talk about was making sure that those days are used effectively, and that means planning, which is preparing for that weekend, for those two weeks of training to make sure it happens as scheduled, and then the other part is the equipment, making sure you've got the things you need to conduct that training the way it needs to be. That's what I cover.

MR. MCKINNON: All right. Is your position any different on –

GEN. LEMPKE: Yes, it is. I took over –

MR. MCKINNON: You know where I'm going then.

GEN. LEMPKE: Yes, I sure do. I took over as president of the Adjuncts General about four days after BRAC hit, and you're all well aware that there were very serious issues with the Air Force proposals for BRAC, and they deeply affected the National

Guard. And that position, those positions, were unknown to both the Adjuncts General and to the National Guard leadership at the time that the BRAC Commission released its – or the BRAC list was released by DOD. And it was up to us, if you will, state Title 32, to identify those deficiencies and present them to the commission just like this. And it's unfortunate that it has to come to turning to us with our limited capability. We're tactical, not generally strategic in our duties, yet having to step up and deal with a national issue like that from the state level – later on, towards the end of QDR, suddenly things happened and suddenly the Army is introducing a plan that will reduce our brigade, our overall strength, by 17, later about 25 (thousand), 26,000, and along with that adjusting some of our existing brigades – complete surprise; a large surprise even to National Guard leadership at the time.

And again, we, as Adjuncts General, had to take on that issue directly with the Army and also directly with Congress, and I will also say that governors had to weigh in rather strongly on that issue in order to get it corrected and get it back onto the right track. Now, that tells me that we need greater strength and a stronger voice at a higher level within DOD to deal with the issues of the largest reserve organization – reserve component organization, Army and Air National Guard, in this country. We're delicate in some respects. We're community based. We can't afford just to close a base like that and then expect to reopen it five years later when, oh, we made a mistake. That's not how the National Guard can operate. We operate on history, we operate on community involvement, and that's the success of our recruiting, the success of our retention. And those factors, and many others, need to be considered when decisions are being made about exactly how the National Guard is going to function and be formed in the future – therefore, our strong feeling that the chief of the National Guard Bureau needs to be elevated to a higher position to have a stronger voice within DOD.

You also mentioned separate line item, and I mentioned that also early in my remarks. We've been through this a number of times where funding was promised, it was there, and then it was adjusted later. And our ability to plan and organize is a little bit different than the active Army and Air Force. We aren't quite as agile in terms of our – because of our community basing concept of being able to adjust to things like that. So we really have to get what's promised to us – decide it, promise it and give it to us. And that's been highlighted more than ever now that we are actually supporting the fight overseas but also at home, as always, supporting sometimes some very large homeland security, homeland defense needs. And sometimes to solve that problem takes drastic measures, and perhaps separate line items for some items in our budget is the appropriate way to do that.

You mentioned sense of urgency. We feel we have a – and we have voiced very strongly – a sense of urgency for bringing the Guard to the level that it needs to be for supporting our nation, both overseas and at home, in our operational reserve role – hence, Senate Bill 2658 and the House version, 5200, being there. I don't know if it's the cure-all, but it's a major step and it deals very directly with the issues of voice, strong voice, and also capability.

MR. MCKINNON: Speaking of capability – just one last thing here – Admiral Keating was here this morning and he talked about the fact that when they have NORTHCOM they really – at least in Katrina – did not have a good feel for – what did you have in the way of readiness – facilities, what your training was, what you could do or couldn't do. They knew you had manpower out there but they didn't know what it could do. Is there anything now to sort of tighten that up so everybody knows what's going on?

GEN. BLUM: Absolutely. We've worked with NORTHCOM staff, and provide them today situational awareness, common relative operating picture on a daily basis. We're not going to wait till the next hurricane; we're doing it every single day, and frankly I've even made calls out there and say, are you getting what you need, are you getting the resolution that you need, are we answering the questions that you have, and if not, tell us what questions you have. I've asked Admiral Keating, Frank – I went to Northern Command and I said – in the military I grew up in, the higher headquarters that had a desire for information sent a report format to me and I populated the data on that report format and I submitted it in the frequency and the interval that they wanted. And I said, please, NORTHCOM, develop a reporting format that meets your needs and I'll populate it with data and provide it to you at the frequency you want it. And I think we're there. I think the proof will be in a crisis situation, but in day-to-day we're far better now than we were then. His comment was fair for the first 48 hours. After that they probably have more information. You know, maybe it wasn't useful in the format we sent it, but I think we've corrected that. I think we're beyond that and we're in a much better place today.

ADM. VENUTO: Commissioner McKinnon, could I address one thing with you with respect to the training demand on our reserve force? It is – as you point out, the more complex our forces get, the more training is required to do that. The Coast Guard has taken a creative approach. We have the same challenges. For instance, we know that we need boat coxswains, boat engineers and boarding officers. For instance, our law enforcement boarding officer course is five weeks long and active duty for training is two weeks. And so I challenged our training community to come up with an effective way that we could train our reservists because we know we need reservists as boarding officers.

And so we have done, on that course – and we just are piloting it – we took out all the knowledges and we have online a computer-based training for the knowledges, which are three weeks, and we have cut the actual resident training program down to two weeks so that when they come there they've got to have passed the knowledges part so when they do their ADT time, we can actually train them in the kinds of practical skills that they do, and we're using this as a model so that we can leverage what we have because all of our advanced training, not our rating training – you know, to come in and get a rating, whether you're a boatswain mate or anything else – but all of our advanced sea school training, most of it is more than two weeks long. And so we are looking very carefully at leveraging that and getting all the knowledges out, putting it on the computer

and have them do their IDT time, or in spare time, and then come and use that two-week active duty time every year to maximum effect.

MR. MCKINNON: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. PUNARO: Okay, thank you. I think Commissioner Brownlee has a quick question, then we've got one or two more and we're done.

LES BROWLEE: Yes, let me just thank all of you for your service and all those you lead as well. And, General Blum, I had the pleasure of working with you on almost a daily basis and I can say that your voice was always clear, and when necessary, very loud, and I appreciate it very much. The Guard that we have today and the superb force that it is that way due in great part to your extraordinary leadership and we very much appreciate that.

Let me just ask you if you could summarize for us the major changes that the Army has made to improve its mobilization process since 9/11 and what further changes would you recommend?

GEN. BLUM: Well, I wish I could tell you that we made bold changes, significant changes. We've made changes but they've been on the margin, to be honest. They've been – it's tough to make changes. Here is what mobilization does, for those of you that don't – there's only two kinds of people that go through this: Army Reserve and Army National Guard. We're the only people that get put through this wringer. (Chuckles.) The Air Force deploys. I'm not talking about special mission training that's needed to go, but all the rest of the Reserve components, they get activated. That means mobilized to them. For the National Guard and the Army Reserve, mobilize means, oh, no, we're going to get assembled someplace, sent someplace, treated like trainees or detainees, and then we're going to get all the equipment, all the shots, all the medical attention that we should have had and didn't have before we were called, all the equipment we need to have but didn't have before we were called, all the training we should have had but didn't have before we were called. And this goes on at least once and then if the commander says, already did that, everybody goes, we can't trust you; we're going to start all over again. Then that person passes the information to somebody else who goes, I can't trust you and the commander; we've got to do this again.

So you may do these things two and three times to include ridiculous things like counting your teeth. I mean, how many dentists need to look in your mouth to figure out whether you're deployable? How many doctors need to look wherever they want to look to determine whether you're deployable? And why isn't – why don't they get – so we've got a lot of work to do in this area. It could be shortened dramatically but it can't be shortened dramatically until you get – the way to shorten it is you get serious about resourcing the Reserve component to get the physicals done so you don't have to do them when you call. You find authorities that allow the dental work to get done so I don't have to pull five teeth to send a kid on an airplane in a war.

Going to war is traumatic enough. You don't want to go in there with four teeth less than you showed up at the airport with. You don't want to keep people away from their jobs and their families. We're already going to do – we already signed on for one year boots on the ground. Active-duty unit, one year boots on the ground means you're away from Fort Hood, Fort Bragg, Fort Polk one year. If you're in the Guard or Reserves it means you're away from home 18 months before you get back to home, before you get back to work. There's a big difference between 12 months and 18 months. It's a half a year's difference. And then how you're housed, how you're treated matters for that six months.

So, sir, until we get the equipment in our hands, until we get the funds and the resources so that they can have the training accomplished before they are mobilized and before we get the medical screening and administrative work to include two days – I'll bet you the average soldier spends at least two days screwing around a MOB station just getting his pay straight. See, this isn't just "administrivia." This really matters how fast you can get the troops to the fight. And then you add two more days for this and two more days for that; pretty soon you're there six months. And then you have a big, huge apparatus that's necessary to do this and all the checks and balances.

So there have been some changes, and I have been to some MOB stations where it is being done about as well as it can be done until we get the equipment and the training and the resources fixed. But I've also been to other places where it's the same as it was when we started, and that's clearly not what you intended and it's not what I intended either, but this is – this is the pig moving through the python. What the bosses want and then what that system really allows when it starts getting through all the layers of the bureaucracy – and this isn't something that started yesterday. This system was built 50 years ago. The mobilization process is very, very analogous to the way we sent soldiers from the United States to Europe and Japan and World War II. It's not a heck of a lot different. And the only place it exists is the United States Army.

So it's really up to the United States – the only people that can fix this are or is the Army, and I think that – I'm committed to help fixing it. I'm not just going to be a bomb-throwing anarchist and complain about it. There are some reasons it has to be the way it is, but we're trying to fix the symptoms and the disease is we've starved the reserve component out for resourcing, equipping, and given them the entitlements they should have had and the medical care they should have had, and the medical treatment they should have had, and the dental care they should have had, and the bullets that they should have had to train with, and the OPTEMPO dollars they should have had to train with, and the funding to support the 78 days the average National Guard or reservists spends, and he only gets paid for 39, but for God and country he's throwing in about 40 days a year away from his wife and family just to do what we're supposed to do day to day. And, yeah, I think it's time we address that, sir, no kidding, and I'm glad you brought it up; I really am. I appreciate that. Thank you, sir.

MR. BROWLEE: That's all I have, Mr. Chairman.

GEN. LEMPKE: I'd like to mention four specific areas with regard to your question, Mr. Commissioner, if I could. One is Nebraska and every other state is like us. We want to send a unit that is 100 percent ready to go. So we do everything that's going to need to be done to process those soldiers before they ever leave the state so that the most time that our soldiers have at their hands is the first two weeks they're at the MOB site, and I would simply submit that if Army could validate our in-state mobilization process, I would be willing to put up my folks and say, tell them if they're doing the right thing if they are. Let me do it and make it count. If they're not, either I'll fix it or we'll send them down for the full MOB at the station – a very easy process to change. It would save probably a couple of weeks in the MOB process.

We also de-MOB in the state of Nebraska. Most of our units that come back, have come back directly to Nebraska instead of having to go through a MOB station and get in line with everybody else. This won't work for every state, but in many states they have the capability and the right sizes of units to accomplish this. So we do in four or five days or less what it takes 10 days or more to do at a de-MOB station. Plus the soldiers get to see their families for the first time much, much sooner.

We need to pay more attention to medical and personnel records throughout the normal year. This is a major difference between the Air Guard and the Army Guard. The Air Guard fulltime manning is at like 92 percent, and so they're able to track records throughout the month, and so when an airman – an Air National Guard's airman is ready to mobilize, the records are ready. There is not a major effort going back to find things to put in the record so they can leave; they're ready to get on the road. And the Army Guard – quite frankly, we've never had the fulltime force to keep our records in that state of readiness. If we could do that with greater fulltime support, our soldiers would be just as ready from a records standpoint. And General Blum's particular point on that on medical is particularly important. The Air Guard is ready medically; typically we're not because the Army screens whereas the Air Guard does more of an intense look.

I think now that we know that we have mobilization schedules that are out there – for example, I know from Nebraska which units are going to mobilize in the August-September timeframe, getting forces from the Army reserve and active duty to come in and help us prepare for that MOB I think would cut down overall time spent at the MOB station. And the more time we can spend in the state preparing while we're still around the families, and minimize the time at the MOB station is helpful.

Finally, I think there is a place here for some tailored mobilization training, and I'll give you an example of that. Our medical evacuation unit – air evacuation unit has been mobilized and served three times throughout the decades of the '90s and early 2000. They can do this in their sleep, yet they're being tasked to mobilize and report to Fort Hood, along with many other units, to form an aviation brigade that's going to train for four or five months. Putting them – inserting them into the process at the right time would be a much more productive way to use this unit, and there are other units that are out there like that – not that you don't necessarily need to send the leadership ahead to get that leadership team going, but for the folks that are truly doing the work, the soldiers,

I think that more work could be done to tailor when exactly they're needed at a MOB site to become part of a unit, to finalize their training, and then move overseas.

MR. PUNARO: Okay.

MR. MCKINNON: (Off mike.)

MR. PUNARO: Yeah, quickly.

MR. MCKINNON: I just want to follow up on one thing real quick on the air evacuation. That's the medical –

GEN. LEMPKE: Yes.

MR. MCKINNON: You're talking about the medical. Would it be cheaper to use commercial aviation on a fixed-contract basis to do that and then use your equipment for something more productive from a military standpoint?

GEN. LEMPKE: You're talking commercial aviation for medical evacuation?

MR. MCKINNON: They generally run a circuit where they –

(Cross talk.)

GEN. LEMPKE: This unit will be in the middle of combat, Commissioner. I mean, they are the first on the scene if there is an IED and the enemy is still giving fire. So the job they do is not appropriate for commercial sources, no.

MR. MCKINNON: Are they flying them like from Germany back to the states or that type of thing?

GEN. LEMPKE: No. No, this is helicopter.

MR. MCKINNON: Okay.

GEN. LEMPKE: Helicopter.

MR. PUNARO: Okay, thanks. Commissioner Eckles.

LARRY ECKLES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First of all, thank you for spending your valuable time with the commission this afternoon. Many of the questions that I had for you have been answered throughout this afternoon's proceedings, but I do have a couple.

Admiral Venuto, two states currently have maritime militia-type units within their states that can respond to the governor when needed. Given the jurisdictional and the

coordinating items that we've discussed earlier this afternoon, in your opinion should states have a state-based maritime security capability much like they have with the National Guard?

ADM. VENUTO: The states you mentioned, Connecticut and New York, I believe have the naval militia – a state naval militia. The Coast Guard's position on this is that if the governor of the state feels that they need to have some kind of naval reserve force for whatever capability they feel they need them for, we support that effort. What we asked, though, and what we did with both Connecticut and New York was is that we entered into a memorandum of understanding with the naval militia in both those states because there were some instances where members of the Coast Guard reserve wanted to be members of the naval militia, and so we entered into a MOU with the naval militia to understand that there may be an instance where the Coast Guard wants to call up the reservist and the state wants to call up the militia member and they're the same person, that the federal recall would take priority over the state recall. That is the only area of concern and conflict that we have. Other than that, if the state desires to have that kind of capability, that's to the discretion of the state and we would work with them in a cooperative nature just as we plan to do with Connecticut and New York if the event occurs.

MR. ECKLES: Thank you. The National Guard Bureau has no formal direct connection with the joint chief of staff of the secretary of Defense. General Blum, this question is directed toward you. In your personal opinion, should future chiefs of the National Guard Bureau have a formal connection at the Office of the Secretary of Defense level?

GEN. BLUM: You have it right. The National Guard is set up and authorized under U.S. Code Title 10. It was written before there was a Joint Chiefs of Staff. It was written – it was really last written in about 1947 with some amendments in '63 and not much done since then. It does not – unfortunately it recognizes the role and responsibility of the chief of the National Guard and NGB with the Departments of the Army and the Air Force. It does not mention or acknowledge that there is something called the Department of Defense or the secretary of Defense. It doesn't recognize or acknowledge the existence of something called the Joint Staff or the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. It clearly doesn't know that NORTHCOM – it makes no mention of the United States Northern Command. It makes no mention of the assistant secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense.

In practicality, the person that occupies the position of chief of the National Guard Bureau cannot possibly do his or her job effectively without having some relationship with the secretary of Defense, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs. The Bureau is a joint bureau but it's not recognized as a joint activity at DOD. When you think about that, that gives you some pause to what needs to be looked at there and what needs to be fixed.

In my judgment, it is impossible to effectively employ the National Guard – if I were the chairman of the Joint Chiefs or the secretary of Defense – without some kind of

a coordination relationship, channel of communication with the chief of the National Guard Bureau. What the Army and Air National Guard do for the Department of Defense day-to-day, every day here in the United States is significant. Now, we talked about Katrina on 2 September and I told you how busy we were, but what I didn't tell you is the same day we were doing all that, we were fighting forest fires in the Northwest, we were fighting mudslides in California that day, we were sandbagging rivers in Vermont and New Hampshire that very day, we were dealing with a subway security in New York that very day. So we didn't stop the world for Katrina. We did all of everything we were doing. We didn't walk away from supporting JTF North and the Border Patrol and DEA and civilian law enforcement all across this country. We continued to do those missions as well as search.

So our blouses, our shirts, our uniforms don't say National Guard; they say United States Army, they say United States Air Force. When an American citizen sees a citizen soldier or an airman in uniform, they are ambassadors, representatives. In fact, in many states it is the only Department of Defense live people they see in uniform ever because there are no federal installations – camps, stations, naval bases, Marine Corps bases. They don't exist in a lot of our states, and in fact, the number of them get smaller and smaller every year. So the only face the American people see of DOD is the National Guard in their state. Hence, obvious need in my judgment – at least in my judgment for some relationship, a formal relationship, with all of those players that I named that are not addressed in the law that establishes my job and authority right now. And frankly, the chief of the National Guard Bureau, the way it was described in original law was to be the head of an organization that is dramatically, drastically different than what we have today and what we're going to need for tomorrow.

MR. ECKLES: Given what you just said, do you think that the chief of the National Guard Bureau should sit on the Joint Chiefs of Staff?

GEN. BLUM: I will dodge that one, Commissioner, because that is a question that I think is inappropriate for me to comment on while I'm serving as a chief of the National Guard Bureau.

And I have said, and will continue to say, I don't think that the National Guard should be a separate service. I'm not advocating that we be like the Coast Guard or that we be like the Army or the Navy or the Air Force or the Marine Corps. I think we need to remain Federal Reserves of the Air Force and the Army, but I think there has to be a new – we have to have a full integration that we have not yet achieved. We're working through it every day. We're getting better but we're not there yet. We have to have full integration, we have to be seamlessly funded, and then there has to be a greater appreciation of those two services, as well as the Department of Defense in general and the Joint Staff, for what the National Guard brings to the table for both the federal mission when we're in service to the nation in Title 10.

And then we've got to help them with the high-frequency hearing loss and the blind spot that exists in the Pentagon to a significant extent for the value of the National

Guard when it's in service to the governors, which really is in service to the nation. In other words, it's DOD assets that are basically being delegated to the authority of the governors. And I adequately talked earlier why I think that is the rightful way to do it here in the United States.

I don't profess that the governor should have anything to say about what troops are doing for combatant commanders around the world, but when governors who are elected to be responsible and have authorities equal to and greater than the president in many cases, within their political boundaries or their state or territory, they should very well have something to say about what military forces are doing within the limits of their legal authorities in that state or territory. Absolutely.

MR. ECKLES: Thank you very much. Mr. Chairman, that's all I have.

MR. PUNARO: Okay, thank you. And let me close out, General Blum, and get your observation on this issue of operational reserve, strategic reserve, homeland defense. I think, you know, the practical reality is, and the testimony we have – General Dykes's (sp) excellent paper that he presented to the Reserve Symposium some months ago. I mean, we do have an operational reserve now – Dr. Chu, General Odierno – it's on the record from all the chiefs. It's spelled out in – you know, again, General Dykes pointed out that, hey, we've got to make some adjustments to the laws, rules, regulation, policies to take that into account.

But I'm trying to figure out – and we're going to ask this question of all the other RC chiefs when they testify before us in July – does that mean that we no longer have to be concerned about our reserve components being a strategic reserve as well? I mean, we still have major regional contingencies or whatever the buzz word – the term of art for those things are now – North Korea. We have other potential powers that would cause the kind of strategic mobilization that we would have thought about in the peak of the Cold War, where we promised NATO 10 divisions in 10 days at the Soviet Warsaw Pact. Forces crossed the Fulda Gap at a postulated rate of advance of 72 kilometers per day. That is what you had a strategic reserve for.

Is it either/or situation, or do we still have to be concerned about – and certainly the Individual Ready Reserve is not an operational reserve. At least it isn't organized, trained or equipped today, and that is primarily an Army issue because it's so large. It's not an operational reserve.

So I guess what I'm trying to figure out is if we put all our eggs and say, holy smokes, this is an operational reserve; let's make all the changes, let's change all the funding, let's change all the law, rules and regulations, are we saying let's forget about the fact that we need a strategic reserve, or what is your view on that?

GEN. BLUM: No, we have to be the strategic reserve while we're part of the operational rotational force.

MR. PUNARO: Right.

GEN. BLUM: It's not an either/or thing. If we go to either/or, we will break the volunteer force as we know it today –

MR. PUNARO: Correct.

GEN. BLUM: And we will be forced into alternatives that will provide a far less professional military than we've been able to achieve in the last 30 years. I would not want to throw out that goodness to go back to the – first of all, the force that I came into was a very hollow, broken, incapable force, and the National Guard that I joined early in my life was far different in capabilities, much less capable than what the National Guard is today. Today the National Guard is second to none. I mean, I'll tell you, the Air National Guard and the Army National Guard don't take a backseat to any armed force on the planet.

MR. PUNARO: I'm not suggesting, and I haven't seen, that anyone in the Department of Defense is advocating that we no longer need a strategic reserve; it's just that all the emphasis right now is on the operational reserve. And what you're saying is it's not an either/or situation; we still need to basically think about organizing, training, equipping, preparing funding our reserve component as both a strategic reserve and an operational reserve –

GEN. BLUM: Yes sir, because –

MR. PUNARO: – taking into account the fact that there going to be, particularity the Guard, more involved at home and homeland defense.

GEN. BLUM: Absolutely, but not exclusively involved in homeland defense.

MR. PUNARO: Right.

GEN. BLUM: And it was very useful – it was very useful for our enemies to watch, at the height of Katrina, while we still were involved overseas in unprecedented numbers – we still had a significant reservoir of capability – 300,000 just in the Guard alone – still left that I could have called upon if the secretary of Defense or the President or the governors needed it. And I want our enemies overseas to know that.

And another thing, when you use the National Guard or the reserve component – any of the reserves – and our adversaries have an opportunity to walk up and talk to these young soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines and Coast Guard people, and they find out that they have something to do when they go home different than serve in uniform, and they have a family and a job and a career to go back to, and that they interrupted all of that and put their life on hold and their life at risk to come over into this region of the world, and people start finding out what citizenship and patriotism and selfless service is all about, and volunteerism, I've seen grown men cry – and I'm not exaggerating – I've

seen Eastern Europeans cry when our soldiers told them what they did before they were mobilized and what they were going back to.

And there is no other force in our great military that can do that but the Guard and Reserves. They know professional military soldiers and they expect to see professional military soldiers out of the United States of America. They don't expect to see citizens of the United States that have other, better alternatives and more comfortable and safe ways of making a living and sustaining themselves put that on hold to come over because they care enough to spend a year or a year-and-a-half of their life helping people in that region of the world in advancing the issues from this country. It is a powerful message that no soldier, sailor, Marine, or Coast Guard – they can send other than a reservist.

MR. PUNARO: As Winston Churchill called it, twice a citizen.

GEN. LEMPKE: I'd like to just give you, if I can, a soldier and airmen perspective here on the concept of operational and strategic reserve. We're at about 340,000, and I'll just use the Army National Guard as an example; the air would follow the same example too. We're needed on a rotational basis and we're considered an operational reserve. Sometime in the not-too-distant future, hopefully, the situation will die down and the need will not be there for quite the amount of rotation and quite the amount of participation that we have today. If we stay at the, say, the 350,000 that we're growing to, and continue to serve, continue to train, being ready for the next time that we have to up the ante a bit and operate as an operational reserve again, then our soldiers, our families and our employers understand that.

If, on the other hand, when the conditions calm down and we look at budget and the force structure starts going down so that our participation level stays high – at a high rate simply because the force structure is going down, then you have an operational reserve no matter what condition you're in. It's important that we understand – that we sustain a level of force that will be more or less used depending on conditions. And so it kind of varies between an operational reserve, where we're at right now, but at other times a strategic reserve. That's what our citizen soldiers, their families and employers expect. They're there when needed, but when not needed, they still want to serve but they don't want to serve in a continued high-utilization rate.

MR. PUNARO: Right. And I mean, the point that General Blum made is, you know, you have the potential to break the volunteer force, but the other thing is you have certain threat contingencies that require strategic reserve. And by the way, on any given day we've got 1.3 million active duty personnel. Let's say, rough order of magnitude, 300,000 are deployed overseas; you still have a million left in reserve. I would call that a strategic reserve. Now, they worry about, okay, what kind of units and capabilities are they packaged up into? So America's military, whether it is Guard, reserve or active duty, has a tremendous reservoir of capability.

But I think what I'm hearing is it's not an either/or, and I think the commission certainly has always understood it that way and we're not suggesting anyone in the

Department of Defense is advocating that any differently. All the emphasis right now is on the operational side, so I think that helps clarify that.

Are there any points any of the three of you wish to make? Any alibis or closing comments as we close out? Yes, sir.

GEN. LEMPKE: I'd like to go back to one of the very first comments that you made, Mr. Chairman, with regard to the use of federal funds, and then the discussion of federal leadership, if you will.

MR. PUNARO: Okay.

GEN. LEMPKE: To me, you need to have the people best prepared to be in the leadership situation. When I wake up every morning, I've got contingencies going through my head about what I'm going to do in Nebraska for a myriad of things. I know all the state agencies, I know what their capabilities are, I know the local communities, I know what their cultures are as well as how they operate – under what particular rules and regulations and laws that they operate. I know all that about Nebraska, and I can imagine many scenarios involving disaster situations in my state, as every other adjunct general can in their state, that would involve some combination of simply the National Guard within Nebraska, perhaps getting help from Missouri or Kansas or perhaps needing Title 10 support. I'm ready for that.

When you talk about connecting the federal funds with somebody from a strict federal position coming into assume a position of command, it's like having a brand-new quarterback that doesn't know any of the plays running into the huddle. And so I think you need to make sure that you keep straight, obviously the nation has a commitment above a certain level and it's promised to support a state in an emergency situation with federal resources. That's always been there. Some of it's military; most of it isn't military, but when it comes to leadership, it needs to be the right leadership at that moment that knows the area of operations that the disaster is happening in.

MR. PUNARO: Yeah, I understand that. I mean, we have a principle in the commission we've articulated from day one that oversees the combatant commanders, the active military, our forward deployed. They have the lay of the land, they know the people, they know the command and control, they have the intel, they have the situation on the ground, and typically the Guard and Reserve augment and reinforce them overseas.

Here in the United States, the Guard and Reserve are forward deployed. They've got the command and control, they've got the local relationships, they know the territory. And frankly, you know, I think we all look more to concept where the active component, if you need them, fall in and augment and reinforce the Guard and Reserve. And I know General Keating believes that General Blum does. The 82nd Airborne has a mission overseas. That doesn't mean they can't be used here but they shouldn't be the force of first choice.

The point I was kind of making is, I think the federal government – for example, your fulltime support in your state are paid for with federal funds, correct, not state funds. The federal government does invest a lot of money and they should invest a lot of money ensuring that your force is organized, trained, properly equipped and ready to go. Whether you need them for a natural disaster in the state, the federal government is making an investment even if the governors running it.

They also got to be ready for that strategic role if they have to be called up, mobilized because we know in the readiness business, to be ready it takes people, and those people have to have the right skills and the right military occupational training, and that's why the readiness ratings, they rate your people. It's not just the number of people you have; they've got to be the right qualifications. Then they manage your training, and it's got to be the right kind of training. And then they measure equipment, and there is two kinds of equipment measurements. You've got to have the equipment on hand but it's got to be maintained and ready to go. If you don't have all three of those things working in combination, you're not going to have a combat-ready unit.

So, I mean, so when you're talking about getting the funds and resources you need, you can't just – and part of the problem with equipment is it's got to be – if you've got all the best equipment in the world and you don't have any trained people, the equipment is not any good. The corollary is also true. And so that is why I think everybody always looks at a balanced funding profile, making sure that you're applying those funds and resources, you know, across the board.

So, I'm preaching to the choir; you all know this a lot better than I do. So, again, we thank you for your tremendous leadership and service to the nation in wartime, what your forces do everyday. We look forward to and appreciate – we've had a tremendous close working relationship with General Blum, General Lempke, with all the associations. We look forward to working with the Coast Guard – a magnificent service – and staying in close touch and bouncing some things off of you.

As you well know, if the Congress didn't think things needed to be changed here, they wouldn't have created a commission like this. We're going to take a step back and look at it in a thoughtful, long-term area. We aren't going to be able to fix anything to deal with this year's hurricane season. We want to look at, what do you need for the next 10 years, you know, and be ready for that. And so we look forward to staying in close touch.

And again, thank you for the great service to the nation and for what your forces do for our country each and every day. Thanks.

The Commission stands in recess until 9:30 tomorrow morning. (Sounds gavel.)

(End of May 3 afternoon session.)