



# MONTHLY ISSUE BRIEF

## May 2004

### Increased Responsibilities for National Guard at Home and Abroad

#### Lieutenant Governors Lead Initiatives to Strengthen Guard and Support their Families

by Karen Imas, CSG/ERC Publications Manager

National defense is a mission often associated with the federal government, yet increasingly states are playing a vital role, overseas and at home, in providing troops, technology and manpower. National Guard members, charged with state and federal defense duties, face particular challenges in today's climate. In response, state lawmakers are enacting policies to support deployed Guard members and their families while advocating on the federal level for an adequate balance between the state/territorial and federal missions assigned to the Guard.

The National Guard is composed primarily of civilians who serve their country, state and community on a part-time basis (usually one weekend each month and two weeks during the summer.) Each state, territory and the District of Columbia has its own Army and Air Force National Guard units. For state missions, the governor, through the state Adjutant General, commands Guard forces. The governor can call the National Guard into action during local or statewide emergencies, such as storms, fires, earthquakes or civil disturbances. In addition, the president can activate the Guard for participation in federal missions.

The Army National Guard has 350,000 troops - 38% of the Army's force structure. The Air National Guard has about 107,000 troops - 34% of the total Air Force. In the war on terror, unprecedented numbers of National Guard members are being called up for longer deployments.

Since Sept. 11, 2001, half the nation's Army National Guard and 30 percent of the Air National Guard units have been activated to meet the national requirements of the war on terrorism according to a report by the General Accounting Office based on the Congressional testimony of Janet A. St. Laurent, Director of Defense Capabilities and Management. Deployments of this size, which have not

occurred since the Korean War, are bringing attention to the challenges faced by "civilian soldiers" and their families. Troops in the Guard must put their civilian jobs on hold when deployed. The concerns about job security, diminished income, and time away from family put great pressure on these troops and their families.

#### Lt. Govs. Take Leadership Role

"The increasing frequency of call-ups is becoming a hardship for some members of the guard who make considerably less in military pay than in their civilian jobs. This has left some of our guard families in tight financial situations, forcing them to struggle to pay bills while their loved ones fight on behalf of our country," said Rhode Island Lieutenant Governor Charles Fogarty.

Many Lieutenant Governors across the country are taking the lead in ensuring that National Guard troops and their families are provided for during deployment and upon their return. Lieutenant Governors are also working to guarantee that state needs, whether homeland security or natural disaster response, are met during periods of high National Guard deployment. The National Lieutenant Governor's Association (NLGA), a CSG affiliate, has passed two resolutions supporting these goals. (see page 2).

The resolution urging adoption of military family relief funds was announced at a February 2004 press conference in Washington, D.C. with Lt. Governors John Carney, DE; Cruz Bustamante, CA; Patrick Quinn, IL; Catherine Baker Knoll, PA; and Charles Fogarty, RI.

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“Having the resolutions passed by NLGA has brought increased attention to the issue, leading to more initiatives among state officials to support the National Guard,” said Julia Hurst, executive director of the NLGA.

### Deployment Since 9/11 and the Federal Outlook

More soldiers were called up and served in support of this nation in 2003 than in any year in the past fifty years. Currently, about 97,000 Army Guard members are in overseas operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, peacekeeping in Bosnia and Kosovo, or federally funded homeland security missions. This is more than a quarter of the Army Guard’s forces.

Since the Gulf War, the active military has downsized some 35 to 40 percent. Consequently, there is greater reliance on the National Guard and on the reserve components. Guard units with certain specialties - military police, transportation, and engineering - are in high demand. In March, when the GAO study was conducted, 60 percent of **Maine’s** roughly 2,000 National Guard troops were activated, second in the nation only to Idaho, largely because many of Maine’s units are specialized.

The deployment of the 631st Engineer Detachment from the **U.S. Virgin Islands** was the first time in the 30 year history of the VI National Guard that troops from a single military unit were deployed together in support of a major conflict. The unit recently returned from an eight month tour in Afghanistan. The troops built facilities including electrical systems and water lines for service members and the local population. (See page 3 for information on deployments by state)

The Pentagon projects that over the next three to five years, it will require between 100,000 and 150,000 Guard and Reserve forces to support ongoing military operations. The Department of Defense (DOD) also expects that mobilizations of up to one year or more will be the norm for Guard components during the next three to five years.



From left to right: Virgin Islands Adjutant General Cleave McBean, Retired General Samuel Ebbesen, Lt. Gov. Vargrave A. Richards, and Governor Charles W. Turnbull welcome returning VI National Guard members from a tour of duty in Afghanistan.

Many of the concerns about longer and increased deployments have been bolstered by the GAO report calling for a restructuring of the Guard. The GAO reports that the DOD, the states, and Congress face three major challenges with regard to balancing the Guard’s future role in overseas and domestic missions:

- (1) the eroding readiness of Army Guard units that may be mobilized for overseas operations within the next few years;
- (2) the need to determine how the Army National Guard should be structured and funded to support federal missions in the longer term; and
- (3) how to balance homeland and overseas requirements.

The GAO report recommends that the National Guard be restructured to reflect its expanded role in defense, and that funding should be increased.

“The way ahead includes making sure that no more than 50 percent of any state’s

Guard force is involved in the nation’s war fighting effort at any given time so that between 50 and 75 percent of the force can be available on a no-notice, immediate basis for missions on their home turf,” said National Guard Bureau Chief, Lieutenant General H. Steven Blum during a speech at a recent National Governors Association meeting.

While decisions on restructuring the Guard will come from the federal level, lieutenant governors, with state legislatures, have been working to ease the strain on activated troops.

### Challenges for States

Some state lawmakers are concerned that with longer deployments, an absence of the Guard may put states at risk in the event of a terrorist attack or natural disaster. New York Governor George Pataki appeared in Congress recently urging lawmakers to

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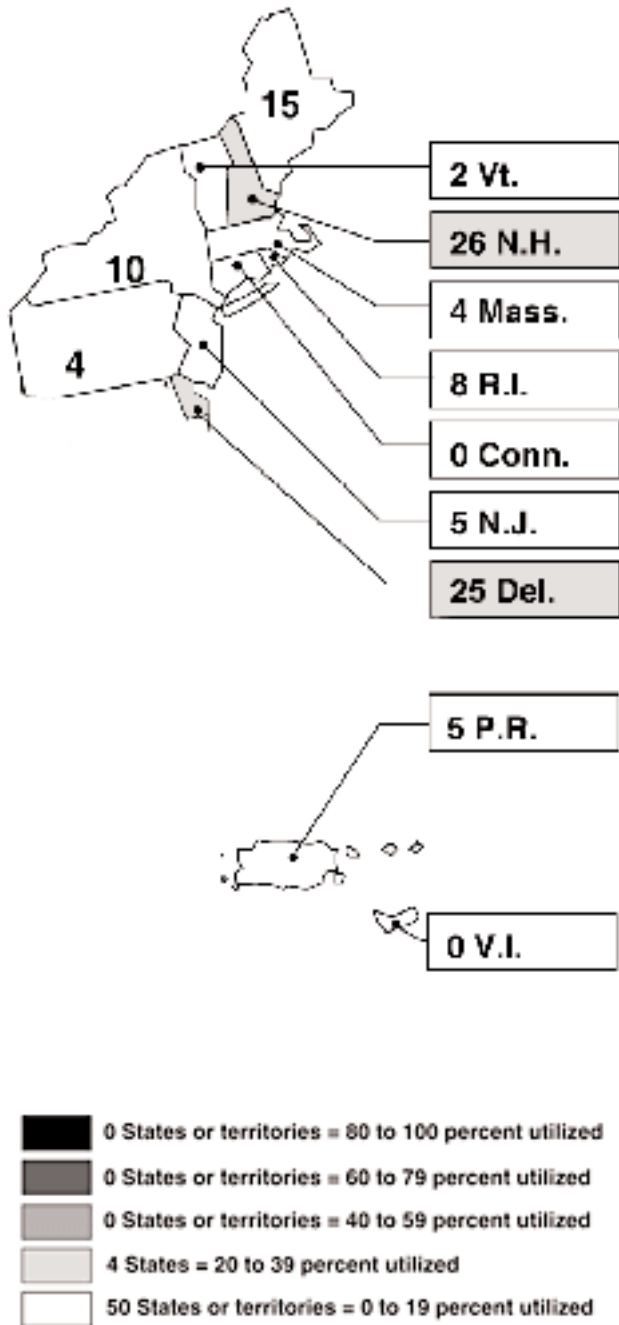
## The National Lieutenant Governors Association Works to Support the National Guard

On February 13, 2004, NLGA unanimously passed two resolutions regarding the National Guard and states and defense. *The Resolution Urging Adoption by State Legislatures of Military Family Relief Funds to Help the Families of National Guard Members and Reservists Called to Active Duty in the Fight Against Terrorism* passed unanimously with multiple co-sponsors (Lt. Govs. Quinn - IL, Bauer - SC, Bustamante - CA, Daggett - ME, Dubie - VT, Fallin - OK, Fogarty - RI, Healey - MA, Knoll - PA, Landrieu - LA, Lemam - AK, Perdue - NC). *More on Military Family Relief Funds on page 4.*

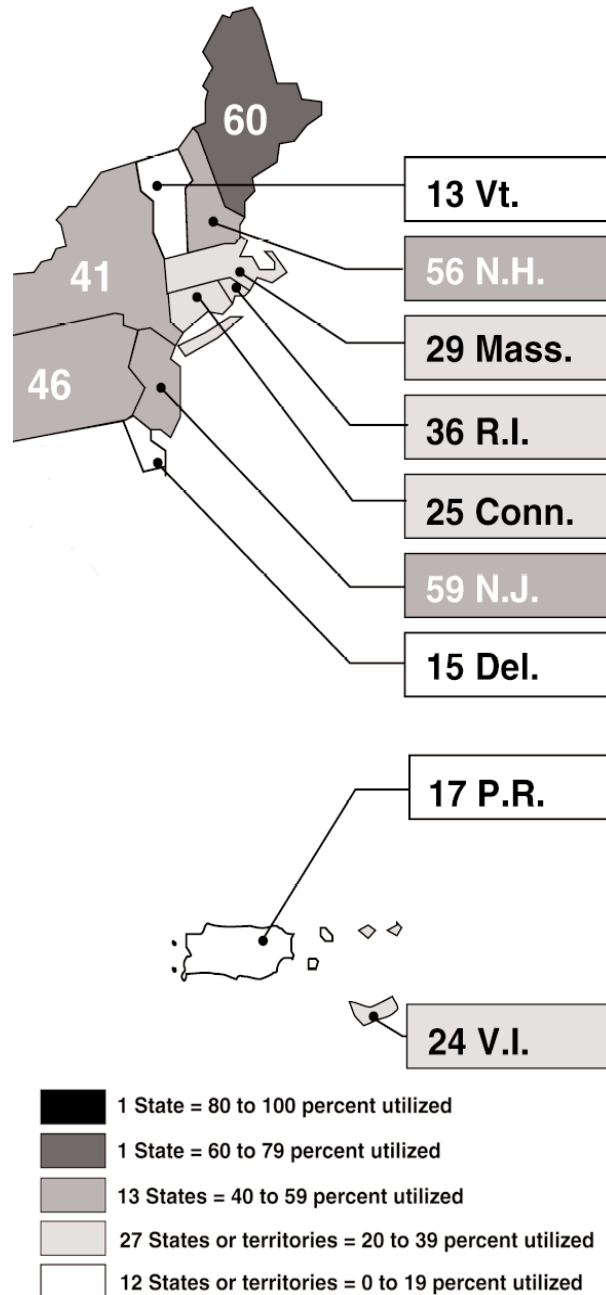
NLGA also unanimously passed a resolution *On Behalf of the National Guard Members & in Support of the Security & Preparedness of the State and Territories*. It states “that the NLGA urges the states, U.S. territories and the federal government to actively seek out and maintain an adequate balance between the dual state/territorial and federal missions assigned to the Guard, and that the NLGA urges the federal government to carefully evaluate all aspects of activations that may cause detriment to the Guard, its member, or the states or territories.”

## National Guard Mobilizations in the ERC

**Percent of Air National Guardsmen Mobilized and Deployed for Title 10 as of March 8, 2004**



**Percent of Army Guardsmen Mobilized and Deployed for Title 10 as of March 8, 2004**



**Fact:** The Guard can be involuntarily activated under federal law for federal domestic or overseas missions. **Title 10** of the United States Code, which is the section that prescribes the use of the Armed Services while in federal service, gives the President authority to activate reservists for various periods of time. **Title 32** allows the governors to remain in control of their Guardsmen while they are being used in the service of the United States and paid for by the federal government.

*Source: GAO Analysis of Army and Air National Guard Data*



Operation Support Our Troops and Operation Holiday Cheer sent close to 3000 care packages to deployed Rhode Island members of the Armed Services and National Guard.

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support a plan that would ensure that at least half of all Guard troops would remain available for use by states in the event of emergencies or natural disasters. Forty-one percent of **New York's** National Guard troops are currently deployed.

Another concern about large Guard deployments is that small communities may lose first responders including police officers and firefighters, popular professions among National Guard members.

Some states, however, feel the squeeze more than others. Many state officials say they have enough Guard members available to deal with local emergencies that may arise. Thirteen percent of **Vermont's** Guard members are currently on federal active duty, below the national average of 30 percent.

While national retention is currently on par with 2003, the stresses of long deployments and fear of injury or casualty may have a negative impact on retention and recruitment rates. For October 2003 through February 2004, the Rhode Island National Guard was running 20% below its 10-year average for enlistments. As one of the state's largest employers, the National Guard's contribution to the local economy is significant.

### State Initiatives to Support the Guard

In the ERC, **Rhode Island** Lt. Gov Charles Fogarty, House Majority Leader Gordon D. Fox, and Senate Majority Leader Teresa Paiva-Weed are leading a multi-faceted campaign called "Strong Families, Strong Troops" advocating for tax credits, education assistance, health care, and financial

protection for National Guard members and their families. There are currently 21 pending bills in the legislature related to "Strong Families, Strong Troops."

To bolster retention and recruitment, one of the RI bills would authorize the National Guard to establish a three-year program to pay a recruitment finder's fee for persons referring enlistees who complete basic training. Two related bills would provide free tuition to public universities in the state to the spouse and children of members of the Guard or reservists who die on active duty.

**Delaware** Lt. Governor John Carney has been appointed by Governor Ruth Ann Minner to lead a comprehensive program to help part-time troops in the state. One initiative would extend state health insurance benefits for Guard member families up to two years from the current six months.

In the Commonwealth of **Puerto Rico**, the government passed a law in April 2003 ensuring that university students in the reserves and the Puerto Rico National Guard are not academically or financially penalized when called to duty. There are 6000 Guard members and reservists enrolled in different universities and institutions of an advanced academic level in Puerto Rico.

### Funding Levels

Day-to-day control of the Guard rests at the state level, but 95% of its money - about \$13 billion (2001) - comes from the federal government.

### Military Relief Funds

A separate bill, introduced on Lt. Governor Fogarty's behalf by a bipartisan group of state senators and representatives, would create the Rhode Island Military Relief Fund. The legislation, which is currently pending, would add a voluntary check off box to the state income tax form for donations. Private groups could also donate to the fund.

Military Relief Funds are part of a national effort to provide grants of \$500 to

Currently, about 97,000 Army Guard members are in overseas operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, peacekeeping in Bosnia and Kosovo, or federally funded homeland security missions. This is approximately a quarter of the Army Guard's forces. - (GAO Report)

\$2,000 to families of National Guard members and reservists.

"One third of our Guard members make less in the military than at their civilian jobs and they are worrying about making ends meet," said Lt. Governor Fogarty.

In a survey of 481 Army National Guard members from six states, the GAO found that 450 of them had experienced pay problems. Families stateside bear the burden.

The first military relief fund law came into effect in **Illinois** in February 2003. To date, \$829,000 has been distributed in grants to more than 1,800 families in the state.

"There are 311,951 dependents of citizen soldiers who have plenty to worry about when their loved ones are stationed on the frontlines in the fight against terrorism," said Illinois Lt. Governor Pat Quinn.

He has launched Operation Home Front, a Web site dedicated to offering services to National Guard members and reservists and informing them about their rights under the Soldiers' and Sailors' Civil Relief Act.

Governor John Baldacci (**Maine**) recently signed into law military relief fund legislation. Similar bills are pending in a number of states including **Pennsylvania, New York, California, and South Carolina**. A military relief fund was set up by Governor Minner in April 2003 through executive order. There is also pending legislation for a check-off box to appear on state tax forms that would allow individuals to make donations to that fund.

In the **Pennsylvania** General Assembly, State Representative Victor J. Lescovitz received unanimous approval from his col-

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leagues in the House for his bill to provide an option on the 2004 state personal income tax return for people to make a donation to the Military Family Relief Fund. Pennsylvania Lt. Gov. Catherine Baker Knoll has been active in the work of the NLGA. In the state, 10,746 members of the Guard and Reserve have been called to active duty.

State Senator William Larkin (**New York**) recently introduced legislation to create the "New York Military Family Relief Fund." Senator Larkin is a veteran of 23 years of active duty retired from the U.S. Army in 1967 with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. His bill would assist New York residents who are members of the National Guard or reserves and who have been called to active duty for at least 30 days and assigned away from their homes. Grants of up to \$1,000 for those eligible members that have been injured while on active duty and \$5,000 for those killed in action would be made available. There is an Assembly counterpart bill sponsored by Assemblyman Ronald Tocci.

**Equipment and Supplies for the National Guard**

The recently passed and pending military relief fund bills will not take effect until taxes are collected for 2004. In the meantime, state officials have responded quickly to other Guard needs, particularly equipment and supply shortages. They have

done so through care package drives, working with corporations for donations of supplies, and lobbying on the federal level. Both Air and Army Guard units have reported that they are shorthanded with equipment overseas and that some of the equipment is outdated. Some Guard troops expressed concern that the active Army receives the most current equipment and technologies.

22,000 pieces of equipment belonging to the National Guard had to be transferred from non-deploying units to deploying units to meet the demand overseas. In the event of a domestic emergency, "equipment and personnel may not be available to the states when they are needed because they have been deployed overseas," the GAO report concluded.

**North Carolina** Governor Michael Easley announced the state would be sending additional safety equipment to members of the N.C. National Guard's 30th Heavy Separate Brigade (HSB) to supplement the equipment they are already using on patrols in Iraq.

The 30th HSB will receive handheld radios; laptop computers, which will give more soldiers access to computers to help expedite planning, assignments and execution of their duties; body armor, donated by law enforcement agencies; and battery-operated flashing yellow lights to be used at nighttime checkpoints.

**The Guard Restructures for Increased Responsibilities**

Lt. General H. Steven Blum, outlined a plan to streamline the state military bureaus, the Army Guard's state area commands, and the Air Guard's state headquarters into single joint headquarters. Last summer, the National Guard Bureau began functioning as a joint headquarters and the state and territorial headquarters began functioning as provisional joint commands in October. The intent is to have the 54 joint force headquarters fully operational the start of FY2006.

"This will ensure a rapid and coordinated response to any emergency, making the National Guard more versatile, relevant, and able to meet our national security challenges," said Blum in Congressional testimony.

The reorganization will also make it easier to implement one of the Guard's homeland security pilot programs. Twelve states have been selected to field enhanced chemical, biological and incident response task forces. The states in the pilot program are California, Colorado, Florida, Hawaii, Illinois, **Massachusetts, Missouri, New York, Pennsylvania,** Texas, Washington and West Virginia. ■

**House and Senate At Odds Over Base Closings**

Defying a White House veto threat, the House voted, on May 20, to delay next year's scheduled round of domestic military base closings until 2007. Members rejected, 162-259, an amendment by Mark Kennedy, R-Minn., that would have stricken the two-year delay from the fiscal 2005 defense authorization bill (HR 4200). The vote puts the House on a collision course with the Senate, which voted 47-49 to keep the next round of closures on track for 2005. It also defies the administration, which argues that the military needs to shut down extra capacity to free up money for the on-going war on terrorism. The House did not have the two-thirds majority that would be needed to override a presidential veto.

The Senate does not appear willing to budge on the BRAC time line. Also, President Bush is expected to veto any defense bill that delays the base closures. According to proponents of the base closures, the Pentagon maintains about 25 percent more bases than it needs - an outdated infrastructure as a result of the Cold War. Since 1988, the Department of Defense has closed 97 major installations and realigned missions at 55 others. Prior BRAC actions have resulted in a savings of \$7 billion a year, Raymond F. Dubois, deputy under secretary of defense for installations and environment, testified to Congress last year.

State lawmakers are concerned about the impacts of base closings on their local economies. According to Lt. Gov. Fogarty (RI), military in the state, including the Newport Naval Station and the Naval Undersea Warfare Center, contributed \$85 to \$100 million annually to the economy.