



## NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU

1636 DEFENSE PENTAGON  
WASHINGTON DC 20301-1636

MAY 03 2023

### MEMORANDUM FOR THE STATES, TERRITORIES, AND THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Subject: 2023 National Guard Bureau Guidance on the 2022 National Defense Strategy

Reference: DoD, Unclassified Summary, "2022 National Defense Strategy of the United States of America, Including the 2022 Nuclear Posture Review and the 2022 Missile Defense Review," 27 October 2022

1. Please share the attached 2023 National Guard Bureau National Defense Strategy Guidance across all your units. It highlights how the National Guard must focus on building readiness for strategic competition in support of the NDS.
2. As the combat reserve of the Army and Air Force, it is imperative we understand the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead and meet them head-on.
3. I am confident our Soldiers and Airmen will remain ready to respond to any challenge, today and in the future. Together, we will keep our promise to America to be Always Ready, Always There!
4. Point of contact is Colonel David Doran; Strategic Assessment, Futures, and Initiatives Division; 571-256-7359.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Daniel R. Hokanson", is positioned above the typed name.

DANIEL R. HOKANSON  
General, USA

Chief, National Guard Bureau

Attachment:  
As stated



2023

National Guard Bureau  
National Defense Strategy Guidance

*In support of the 2022 National Defense Strategy*

Chief, National Guard Bureau  
National Defense Strategy Guidance

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*From the earliest days of my Presidency, I have argued that our world is at an inflection point. How we respond to the tremendous challenges and the unprecedented opportunities we face today...will impact the security and prosperity of the American people for generations to come...The People's Republic of China (PRC) is the only competitor with both the intent to reshape the international order and, increasingly, the economic, diplomatic, military, and technological power to do it...Beijing has ambitions to become the world's leading power.*

*—President Biden, 2022 National Security Strategy*

In the 2022 National Defense Strategy (NDS), the Secretary of Defense wrote that a strong, principled, and adaptive military is a central pillar for U.S. global leadership, particularly in the face of challenges arising from dramatic geopolitical, technological, economic, and environmental change. To safeguard U.S. national interests, the Department of Defense (DoD) is working alongside other U.S. agencies and departments to **protect the security of the American people, expand economic prosperity and opportunity, and defend the American way of life**. Strategic challenges will be interconnected, in part because competitors deliberately link vulnerabilities to erode U.S. deterrence, exert economic coercion, and endanger the political autonomy of states. Persistent challenges include strategic competition with the PRC, Russia as an acute threat, persistent threats from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Iran, violent extremists, and other transboundary challenges such as climate change.

The 2022 NDS identifies the PRC as the DoD's pacing challenge. The PRC seeks to undermine U.S. alliances and security partnerships and leverage its growing military capabilities to coerce its neighbors and threaten their interests. The PRC has expanded and modernized nearly every aspect of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) and is focused on offsetting U.S. military advantages. In addition to expanding its conventional forces, the PLA is rapidly advancing and integrating its space, counterspace, cyber, electronic, and information warfare capabilities to support its ability to conduct Joint warfare. The PLA also seeks to reduce the U.S. military's ability to project power, defend our interests, and aid our Allies and partners during crisis or conflict. The PRC remains our most consequential competitor for the coming decade.

As the DoD focuses on the PRC as our pacing challenge, the NDS also accounts for the acute threat posed by Russia and supports robust deterrence of Russian aggression against vital U.S. interests. International efforts to respond to Russia's unprovoked invasion of Ukraine highlight the importance of maintaining the rules-based international order and combining our military strengths with those of our Allies and partners. As such, the 2022 NDS is a call to action for the U.S. defense enterprise to incorporate Allies and partners in all aspects of defense planning.

The scope and scale of threats to the homeland have also fundamentally changed. The PRC and Russia now pose more significant challenges to safety and security at home, even as terrorist threats persist. The PRC and Russia are already

using non-kinetic means against our defense industrial base and mobilization enterprise, as well as deploying counterspace capabilities that can target our Global Positioning System and other space-based capabilities that support military operations and daily civilian life. These threats, along with climate change, pandemics, and other transboundary challenges will increase demands on the DoD's resources, Federal and civil authorities, and the public and private sectors.

Given this strategic environment, the DoD's priorities are:

- Defend the homeland, paced to the growing multi-domain threat posed by the PRC.
- Deter strategic attacks against the U.S., Allies, and partners.
- Deter aggression, while being prepared to prevail in conflict, when necessary, prioritizing the PRC challenge in the Indo-Pacific, then Russia in Europe.
- Build a resilient Joint Force and defense ecosystem.

Among these priorities, the role of the National Guard (NG) remains constant: provide trained, ready, and interoperable units for the warfight and in the homeland by supporting our communities in times of crisis. To ensure we remain interoperable with the Total Force, we must ensure our formations are modernized while divesting capabilities no longer relevant to future warfighting.

The 2022 NDS advances the DoD's priorities through three key strategic ways: **integrated deterrence**, **campaigning**, and **building enduring advantages**. As the Total Force implements the 2022 NDS, we will work in concert with the Departments of the Army and Air Force to sustain and strengthen U.S. deterrence.

### **Integrated Deterrence**

*Integrated deterrence is the centerpiece of the NDS. It means using every tool at our disposal, in close collaboration with our counterparts across the U.S. Government and Allies and partners, to ensure that potential foes understand the folly of aggression (Unclassified Summary of the 2022 NDS, page IV.)*

### *Domestic Operations*

The NG supports integrated deterrence through *deterrence by resilience*—activities that enable the NG and our communities to withstand, fight through, and recover quickly from disruption. Deterrence by resilience includes supporting state, local, and tribal authorities with mitigating vulnerabilities in cyber networks; maintaining NG Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear Response Enterprise Forces to meet future threats; protecting critical infrastructure; and modernizing the mobilization enterprise and NG physical infrastructure to withstand man-made and natural disasters. These actions not only enhance our ability to remain responsive to our communities, but also enhance overall deterrence by reducing our competitors' perception of the benefits of aggression.

### *Army National Guard*

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The Army National Guard (ARNG) supports integrated deterrence by maintaining combat ready forces in-line with directed readiness levels. The Department of the Army utilizes ARNG units within Global Force Management and in accordance with the Regionally Aligned Readiness and Modernization Model to simultaneously employ forces globally while modernizing for future warfighting. In support of enhancing deterrence, the ARNG has aligned all subordinate units to create eight Army Divisions to increase Total Force deterrence capacity, and to normalize Command and Control relationships for large-scale combat operations.

The ARNG also provides strategic depth which makes the ARNG a key member of the Nation's hedge against protracted conflict. Strategic depth, along with the ability to rapidly mobilize and project forces globally remain critical components of deterrence. Combat Training Center rotations are additional activities that enhance deterrence while preparing combat forces to meet Combatant Command requirements. Furthermore, training exercises at all echelons enhance readiness, deter our adversaries, and assure our Allies and partners of our commitment to upholding the international rules-based order.

### *Air National Guard*

Today's Air Force has the smallest, oldest, and least ready inventory in history. Meanwhile, the PRC continues to rapidly modernize. Recapitalizing and fielding an integrated, flexible, adaptable, resilient, and survivable Total Force is required to achieve integrated deterrence. Recapitalizing the Air National Guard (ANG) provides a superior cost to capability ratio to the Department of the Air Force while preserving operational experience required to operate across the spectrum of conflict and alongside our allies and partners.

Rapid divestment and recapitalization of legacy platforms is imperative to strategic competition and integrated deterrence. The ANG must work closely with the Department of the Air Force to recapitalize our fighter fleet to maintain a combat-credible Total Force. ANG units must be integrated by design in Next Generation Air Dominance, the B-21 Family of Systems, Collaborative Combat Aircraft, and all other emerging missions. Additionally, concurrent recapitalization of ANG KC-135 units with the KC-46 and expediting the Next Generation Air-refueling System and Next Generation Airlift Family of Systems are essential. Funding for C-130J Block 8.1 upgrades and external fuel tanks for U.S. Indo-Pacific Command operations are required. However, recapitalization of platforms is only part of the solution.

In a future high-end conflict, the Total Force must be able to maintain information and decision advantage, preserve Command, Control, Communications, Computers (C4) Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) systems, and ensure critical kill webs. Supporting and funding a structured approach to Advanced Battle Management System modernization across the Total Force to include Homeland Defense challenges is imperative to Total Force success. Along with recapitalization and modernization, we must seek innovative solutions to Integrated Deterrence and achieve the DoD's priorities at a cost we can afford.

### **Campaigning**

*Campaigning is the conduct and sequencing of logically-linked military activities to achieve strategy-aligned objectives over time. Campaigning initiatives change the environment to the benefit of the U.S. and our Allies and partners while limiting, frustrating, or disrupting competitor activities that impinge on our interests (Unclassified Summary of the 2022 NDS, page 12.)*

#### *Security Cooperation*

The NG conducts a variety of security cooperation missions, and the State Partnership Program (SPP) is the centerpiece of these activities. As such, the SPP will focus on conducting activities that directly support Combatant Command security cooperation objectives and meet our partner's objectives to ensure clear alignment with the NDS. Nesting SPP activities with Combatant Command security cooperation objectives will ensure SPP activities are integrated for maximum global effect.

#### *Army National Guard*

The ARNG supports global campaigning via rotational missions. Aligned with Defense and Contingency Planning Guidance and DoD regulations, Combatant Commands develop and coordinate plans that require Reserve Component support. Predictable rotational support increases Combatant Command capacity during competition, ensures interoperability, and enhances the long-term collective experience of the ARNG. In support of the Combatant Commands, predictable and rotational missions include serving in key enabler roles, setting the theater, and participating in multinational exercises. These activities enhance deterrence and assure Allies and partners while exercising force projection.

#### *Air National Guard*

ANG Airmen serve in every Combatant Command and contribute to the five Air Force core functions: (1) air and space superiority; (2) intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance; (3) rapid global mobility; (4) global strike; and (5) command and control. To maintain ANG contributions to the core functions, the Department of the Air Force must fund the ANG to support daily campaigning activities, Joint exercises, and reach back activities such as deliberate targeting. The ANG provides the Total Force and our Nation with the capability and capacity required for campaigning.

The ANG is also focused on developing new relationships with Arctic nations. The ANG is advocating for funding of Arctic equipment sets to support the Department of the Air Force strategy for the Arctic. This includes working with NORAD-NORTHCOM on Homeland Defense, conducting an analysis of alternatives for the Arctic, and recapitalizing the LC-130 to support presidentially directed National Science Foundation requirements.

### **Building Enduring Advantages**

*Building Enduring Advantage involves undertaking reforms to accelerate force development, acquiring the technology we need more quickly, and making investments in our extraordinary people, who remain our most valuable resource.  
(Unclassified Summary of the 2022 NDS, page IV.)*

#### *Domestic Operations*

To adapt to future challenges, the NG is implementing numerous NDS-aligned initiatives. One such initiative is supporting DoD's research and development of operational energy initiatives to help the DoD adopt more efficient, reliable, and clean energy technologies. These technologies could be used for DoD missions in both globally remote and strategically important locations within the United States. The National Guard Bureau is also developing options to Command-and-Control non-Federalized NG forces during large-scale, multi-region disasters to ensure our Nation recovers quickly from disruption.

#### *Army National Guard*

Building enduring advantages means adapting to emerging threats and demands. To ensure the ARNG is manned, trained, and equipped for future warfighting, the ARNG is synchronizing modernization plans with the Total Army. To minimize risk, the Department of the Army is integrating ARNG capabilities and capacity as the Total Army modernizes for multi-domain operations. Integration of the Active and Reserve Components is essential to project forces domestically and abroad, while synchronization is key to maintaining a sustainable tempo. As the Army undergoes modernization, units from all components will be placed on a resource priority list. Units that fall lower on the list must actively explore and exercise interoperability of remaining systems and equipment.

#### *Air National Guard*

Building enduring advantages involves undertaking reforms that accelerate force development, adopting new technologies, and investing in our people. Citizen-Airmen possess extraordinary skills and knowledge gained from civilian and military careers that translate into novel solutions and transformative partnerships for the Nation. The result of the ANG's collective innovative capacity is that we continue to maintain sufficient combat capability at a reduced cost. The ANG is also a premier force that develops asymmetric capabilities that informs future force design. For example, the ANG is leading innovation in the Information Warfare domain through establishment of a first of its kind Cyberspace Wing and development of the Cyber-Enabled Air Superiority operational concept. The ANG is also leading the way on Agile Combat Employment and Logistics Under Attack – both critical to deterring the PRC.

### **Conclusion**

For more than 386 years, the NG has risen to every challenge, accomplished every mission, and supported every community. In the past 20 years, we have proven ourselves as an operational reserve with strategic depth. However, the 2022 NDS calls upon all of us to reorient our focus from counterinsurgency operations to strategic

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competition and large-scale combat operations. In the unclassified summary of the 2022 NDS, Secretary of Defense Austin wrote, “America has never been afraid of competition, and we do not shy away from tough challenges, especially when it comes to securing our core strengths and defending our national values.” Over the next decade, we will respond to tremendous challenges ahead, as we always have, and always will.

**Always Ready, Always There!**

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