

Lieutenant General Stanley Clarke, Director, Air National Guard

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"Air National Guard"

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Lt. Gen. Clarke: Good morning. I know all of you have options on where to be right now. There are three different speaking venues, and I'm competing with General Dave Deptula for the same speaking slot, so between having a muffin and coffee with your friends out there or being in here or listening to Dave Deptula, you came in here, so I'm very happy to see all of you. I'm glad you're here.

As the Director of the Air National Guard I represent 105,700 Guard Airmen who have a unique dual responsibility for the federal missions, supporting worldwide combat and contingency operations, as well as our state missions where we support and protect our local communities through securing the homeland and disaster response.

The men and women of the Air National Guard answer the call to our nation and our local communities and we do that on a daily basis. I'm honored to be their representative and I'm honored by their selfless service.

Global vigilance, global reach, global power for America. This is what the United States provides our nation, or the Air Force provides to our nation. This requires trained, ready, eager and courageous Airmen. Our Air Force has them in highest order. I believe we have the best Airmen, the best Air Force in the world.

Our Air National Guard operations, as an operational reserve component, make us a seamless and steadfast member of our total force team. And you'll notice that I'll emphasize total force multiple times. I'm a true believer in it.

Our Air Force -- one vision, one team that delivers an unparalleled advantage to our nation's military by controlling and exploiting air, space and cyberspace domains with unmatched speed and agility, both at home and abroad.

On the first of November 1915, then First Lieutenant Raynal C. Bolling organized and was appointed the Commander of the first aero company, the New York National Guard. This organization is recognized as the first genuine National Guard aviation unit. This was no easy feat as this all-volunteer force borrowed \$12,500 in funding from an Aero Club of America to rent two airplanes. That amounts to about a little over \$280,000 in today's dollars. While still holding their civilian jobs in the local community, Bolling's men conducted flight training and

Air National Guard - AFA - 9/17/13

eventually acquired five more Curtis JN4 Jenny's. Less than only one year after their formation the first Aero Company was mustered into federal service and soon received 40 new aircraft.

These early pioneers were at the forefront of military aviation. Alongside their Army Air Corps brethren they helped usher in a new era of warfare powered by Airmen, fueled by innovation. Our predecessors created the foundation upon which the Air National Guard is built. Our militia heritage, which predates the formation of our federal government, has played a significant role in the security of our nation and it continues to do so today.

When it went into effect 18 September the National Security Act of 1947 created the United States Air Force as a separate military service. It also established the Air National Guard as a reserve component of the United States Air Force. For the past 66 years our Air Force has rapidly evolved to meet the dynamic challenges of warfare around the globe. Our Air Force has celebrated incomparable historical feats, endeavors and successes in our relatively short existence and it's all due to the incredible Airmen who have come before us. The Air National Guard is proud to share and uphold this legacy of decisive air power.

Our Air National Guard is a steadfast partner with the regular Air Force under the leadership of General Frank Grass, Chief of the National Guard Bureau, and the Chief of Staff of the Air Force General Mark Welsh. We integrate seamlessly with the regular Air Force and the Air Force Reserve for many missions anywhere, anytime.

The credit for that, by the way, goes to the United States Air Force. The senior leaders of the past and present have always supported the Air National Guard and the Air Force Reserve as an operational force with readiness dollars, weapon system sustainment and other things that have kept us a very operational force. We are seamless.

My one challenge that I continue to share with our Guard Airmen is simple -- serve with distinction.

This morning I would like to share with you some stories of our Air National Guard that continue to make our total force the world's greatest.

Robin Olds, one of the most intriguing and innovative figures in the history of the Air Force said it best. "The one sure thing we know from the past is that we don't know what the future will hold, especially in aero warfare." I often talk about that. As a nation we plan a lot of things out of necessity that we must

Air National Guard - AFA - 9/17/13

plan for but we never do. On the other hand, we do a heck of a lot of things we never plan for. I can list a laundry list of them. There are things from Korea, Vietnam, the Balkans, on and on and on.

Posturing ourselves to be a flexible and responsive force is paramount. This flexibility must adhere to the context of our current and future fiscal environment. During these dynamic types of fiscal uncertainty, preserving capacity and capability while remaining at a high state of readiness will be essential to our continued success as a total force.

There are many discussions and debates about affordability and accessibility of the Air National Guard. There's also an ongoing debate and many studies about the right force structure mix amongst the active and reserve components. These are healthy and necessary discussions, but what I want to convey to you today is what we can do together. We spend far too much time talking about what somebody else can't do rather than what we can do together. That's the total force concept that I'd like to embrace.

In our Title 32 role we support our communities and our nation through a wide range of homeland operations. Some of these mission sets such as aeromedical evacuation; nuclear, biological and chemical response forces; and support of our civil authorities are strengthened by the skill sets and talents that our Guard Airmen bring from other civilian careers. We also provide the preponderance of our nation's requirement for fighter and tanker alert sites, which is a 24x7x365 no-fail mission.

The nation was shook to its very foundation on April 15th of this year. The bombings at the Boston Marathon caused mass casualties and created immediate panic. Alongside civilian first responders as well as local and federal authorities, the National Guard's presence and immediate actions helped protect American citizens and bring safety and order to this horrific event.

Already on the scene along with many Guard Airmen were members of the National Guard civil support team. These teams are made up of Guard Soldiers and Airmen with a cross-section of skills such as law enforcement, explosive ordnance disposal, and nuclear, biological and chemical detection. That is one example of the unique contributions.

These civil support teams get called out daily, for everything from suspicious packages to the B-1 crash recently, hazardous materials, comm support, et cetera, and are very highly valued in the states.

Air National Guard - AFA - 9/17/13

I often get this question. Why does the governor of a state need fighter jets? I actually like the question. One could also ask why does a governor need tankers, strategic airlift or any of the aircraft in our Air Force inventory. But I would instead pose a different question. Why is it important to the Air Force and to the nation that their fighter jets are in that state?

One of our Air National Guard's greatest strengths is that we are present in communities across the country to include 89 wings in 54 states, territories and the District of Columbia. This gives us an incredible pool of diverse talent to recruit from. In all states the governors, senators and many of the elected officials have a relationship with the Air National Guard that is an Air Force strength.

Historically, with the exception of the Vietnam conflict, the reserve components have played a significant role in every major war or conflict in modern American history.

Some of the lessons learned from Vietnam including the lack of the use of the reserve components of our military were captured by General Creighton Abrams. Abrams believed that when the National Guard and Reserves are mobilized it also mobilizes America and the American public and their national will. His belief soon became the basis for what is known as the Abrams Doctrine.

Hurricane Sandy required a total force effort. As the storm approached the northeast coast of the United States, Air National Guard units from New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, Massachusetts, anticipated missions to support the governor and civil authorities. These efforts sought to save lives, minimize human suffering, stabilize post landfall areas, and enhance security where needed. A response force was ready to accept federal resources within the national response framework.

With strong relationships -- and that's keystone to what we do, partnerships and relationships with governmental and non-governmental authorities -- and building upon lessons learned from previous disaster response efforts, the Air National Guard was ready to support their communities.

Sandy made landfall with unprecedented effects including major flooding and significant power outages. Applying principles of scalability, flexibility, informed speed, and unity of effort the Air National Guard immediately responded before, during and after the storm. The unique construct of the Air National Guard allowed units from across the country to immediately respond. Dozens of missions airlifted countless pallets of supplies as well as utility vehicles to restore power. Under both state and

Air National Guard - AFA - 9/17/13

federal authorities and mobilization Guard Airmen went toward the storm when others were fleeing from it.

One woman who was being assisted by Guard Airmen told the Adjutant General of New Jersey that, "Once I saw those Guard uniforms on the street I knew that everything would be okay."

On the 17th of March, 2012, the United Nations passed a no-fly resolution over Libya. That same day two Air National Guard KC-135s en-route to the CENTCOM area of responsibility were immediately diverted to a forward operating base. Only one day later an Air National Guard package of KC-135 maintenance support, security forces, and logistic supply forces were deployed from CONUS Air Guard bases.

When the U.S. Air Force's initial posture was achieved, the Air National Guard provided 14 of the 24 total tanker aircraft. In addition, Air National Guard EC-130s were flying operational missions meeting or exceeding combatant commander timelines. There is no doubt in my mind that the Air National Guard is accessible and responsive.

Every time our nation has called, we have responded and we respond with experienced Guard Airmen eager to get into the fight.

The Air Force has continuously resourced us to remain in a high state of readiness, as I mentioned before, which allows the Air Guard to be available, whenever needed. That is what keeps us an operational force of the reserve component. An operational force that provides combatant commanders anything they require.

When the Colorado Air National Guard deployed to Jordan this year the Jordanians did not see the Air National Guard. They didn't see that a young crew chief working on those F-16s is also a college student working the night shift at a local hospital back home in the states, while serving as a traditional Guardsman. They didn't see a fighter pilot who is a full-time active Guardsman alongside his wingman who flies for a major airline.

What they did see was the United States Air Force.

It is also transparent to the Combined Forces Air Component Commander at the CAOC. That's because our Air National Guard personnel uphold and execute the same standards as a regular Air Force. We are inspected by the same MAJCOM Inspector General teams. These are the pillars that sustain the total force. As long as proper resources exist, we are a seamless component of the total force.

Air National Guard - AFA - 9/17/13

Let me state that one more time. There are four pillars of the total force in my mind. And folks, I'm probably the most total force Airman you'll find. I've been in the regular Air Force, I've been in the Air Force Reserve and I've been in the Air National Guard. I've served Title 10, Title 32. I've served overseas. I've been a commander in war time overseas. I've been a commander in garrison at home in peace time. So I've got a total force perspective I think is a bit unique from others. And let me state what I've learned out of all those years of doing all of that. There are standards for the pillars that we have for total force.

The first one is as a total force we have to meet the same standards. You can document them a little bit different, but you've got to meet the same standards.

Two, you've got to take the same inspections. You can't take individual special inspections for everybody. We've got to meet all the same inspections that the regular Air Force does.

Three, we have to be operationally engaged. We back out of operational engagements and you might as well put us back in the strategic reserve. That was the Guard I joined in the early '90s. And my friends, it used to be a flying club that went around the flag pole, we occasionally went a couple of places, but it doesn't look anything like that today.

Four, you have to have resourcing to make sure that those first three actually work.

When this C-130 from Charlotte, North Carolina's 145th Airlift Wing conducted resupply and emergency air drops to forward operating bases in Afghanistan. The brave coalition Soldiers on the ground didn't know it was a Guard air crew in a Guard C-130 maintained by Guard Airmen. They only knew the United States Air Force was supporting them. Same standards, same inspections, operations engaged, and the resources where their neighbor [lives].

Last summer the Louisiana Air National Guard from New Orleans and the Massachusetts Air National Guard from Westfield deployed a package of F-15Cs to the United Arab Emirates for a presence in the Arabian Gulf. The region did not care that they were Guard units. What they did notice, however, is that the United States Air Force F-15s were there.

Like most deployments of the Air National Guard units, they were all volunteers. Unfortunately, while the 159th Fighter Wing from New Orleans was deployed, Hurricane Isaac entered the Gulf of Mexico and made landfall in southern Louisiana. The rest of the fighter wing at home station, that was not deployed overseas, was

Air National Guard - AFA - 9/17/13

immediately executing homeland operations, supporting and protecting citizens and the local communities. These Guard Airmen executed life-saving operations by evacuating hospitals and nursing homes, conducting search and rescue missions, distributing food and water. Due to its strength, Hurricane Isaac necessitated F-15s manning the aerospace control alert site near New Orleans to evacuate to a safe distance. Only 62 hours after the storm made landfall the alert fighters were back on status near New Orleans. Then less than two hours after restarting the alert operations they received an active scramble order.

Think about this. This unit's deployed overseas, they're at home doing Hurricane Isaac, and they're doing homeland defense all at the same time.

That's what makes our Air Guard great. Hundreds of Guard Airmen are voluntarily deployed overseas. While their wingmen and families are at home responding to a major hurricane they are still guarding and protecting our nation's borders from airborne threats -- simultaneously executing Title 32 and Title 10 missions. It seems complicated to other people. It's not complicated to us at all.

The nation should be proud of them. I know I am.

This is Tech. Sgt. Melissa Knight from the 185th Air Refueling Wing, Iowa Air National Guard. She's been an intelligence analyst now for eight years. She also has two bachelor's degrees, one in psychology and one in criminal justice, both cum laude. She's an Outstanding Airman. Aside from being named USA Today's Academic All American in 2011, she is also the secretary for the South Dakota Veterans Legal Education Group, educating veterans on available resources and rights; and she helped open a clinic to provide free legal services to veterans. She's also run 13 marathons on the Iowa Air National Guard Marathon Team to aid in recruiting and retention efforts. Tech. Sgt. Knight is currently working on her law degree at the University of South Dakota. However when her unit was called for volunteers to deploy in support of Operation Unified Protector she put her education on hold and raised her hand high. She worked with her law school to restructure her studies, packed her bags, and was out the door.

While deployed overseas she worked a night shift providing critical analysis and briefing the commanders of the KC-135 and C-130 crews before their missions. Her talents and experience made her an invaluable asset to NATO and to the operations.

Air National Guard - AFA - 9/17/13

The impact this deployment would have on her progress on her law degree never even crossed her mind. She did not hesitate to volunteer.

Tech. Sgt. Knight represents tens of thousands of Guard Airmen who are eager to serve, who are operationally engaged. She represents the strengths of the Air National Guard and what we bring to the total force. I believe Melissa is with us here today. Melissa, stand up please.

[Applause].

If you want to get a will written and run a marathon at the same time, talk to Melissa. [Laughter].

Pictured here are a handful of employers of traditional Guardsmen, at just two of our Air Guard Network Warfare Squadrons. These traditional Guardsmen are also Ace Hardware experts in their civilian capacity. The training and experience with cutting-edge technology our Guard Airmen bring from their careers in industry are critical to the success of Air Force cyber operations. I believe we must have an enthusiastic yet measured approach when growing our cyber forces. As a total force we must be aware that combatant commander requirements for cyber are still being developed and solidified.

However, I am confident that as this weapon system matures, the Air National Guard will be a significant contributor and partner.

I also believe it is important to acknowledge that personnel with these high demand skill sets are being sought after by both the Air Force and civilian industry. Therefore we should not compete with each other. Rather by capitalizing on the strengths of the Air National Guard construct, we can partner with the civilians.

Now one thing about this, I looked at this slide, I looked at it with several hats on. I looked at it from the Guard hat and I kind of liked the idea that all of these people bring ideas and skill sets from their civilian employment to the Guard location to talk about what's latest and what's newest and greatest.

I put my employer hat on and I look at that and I say okay, let me get this right. At least once a month, and probably more often, all of these people are going to get together and they're going to discuss things like what's the latest trends in network defense and other cyber operations. I'd probably think as an employer, how do I get more people into that organization so they can do this type of sharing that they will get, and somebody else is going to pay for them to do this, and probably feed them too on the weekend.

Air National Guard - AFA - 9/17/13

I looked at it from an individual perspective and I thought wow what great networking. What a chance for personal growth and opportunity.

This is a fantastic mission set for the National Guard.

Our Air National Guard fully embraces the evolving role of cyber operations as a weapon system. Not only are our military communications and security reliant on robust cyber operations, but we also acknowledge non-kinetic weapons effects that can be achieved through this realm.

This is Captain Rafael Mudge of the Delaware Air National Guard. Captain Mudge developed Cobalt Strike, a collection of offensive cyber security tools for use by professional Red Teams. He founded a software company named Strategic Cyber here in Washington, D.C., and his customers include security consulting firms, government agencies, universities, and defense contractors, and he's a traditional Guardsman who brings his talents and expertise to the Air Force.

These are highly skilled Airmen who bring a lot to the fight.

Partnering with the civilian work force, connecting with America, building stronger ties with the nation in order to execute the Air Force mission. That is what the Air National Guard brings to the total force.

In some of the discussions about the accessibility of the Guard I hear concerns that the pace of deployments and operations are taking a toll on civilian employers of our Airmen, but I haven't seen that.

This is Mike Russell, owner of Steel Plate Fabricators in Knoxville, Tennessee. As a business owner and community leader, Mr. Russell understands the sacrifices our military members and their families make in order to protect our nation. And let there be no doubt that the employers such as him also make significant sacrifices by supporting our Guardsmen.

Staff Sgt. Cameron Layel, a member of the Tennessee Air National Guard is employed by Mr. Russell and has deployed several times over the past six years. Sometimes he deployed with only a few days' notice. Each time his employer has supported and encouraged him. He has been given extra time off to spend with his family before and after deployments, and he has received care packages from his coworkers while at his deployed locations. He always has a job and his friends waiting for him when he returns home. It is due to the outstanding support of employers like Mr. Russell as well as our local communities that our Guard Airmen respond whenever and wherever needed.

Air National Guard - AFA - 9/17/13

I mentioned earlier that my charge to our Guard Airmen is to serve with distinction, and they do every day. Staff Sgt. Todd TJ Labraccio, Jr., was a part of the 105th Security Forces Squadron from Stewart Air National Guard Base in Newburg, New York. He was deployed to Bagram Airfield in Afghanistan supporting the base defense group. This specialized group routinely goes outside the wire to ensure the security of the airfield and provide force protection in any environment. Tragically, TJ was killed in action this month near Bagram. Our thoughts and prayers go out to his family, friends and fellow Airmen.

This young man was only 10 years old when the terrorists attacked America on 9/11. He later joined the Guard in 2008 for one reason -- to serve his country, and he did so with distinction.

His father is also in the 105th Security Forces Squadron in New York and is a state trooper. His mother is the Medical Group Commander there too and is a nurse in her civilian career. They have deployed multiple times. They were personally involved in many of the events I've talked about here this morning like Super Storm Sandy and the Boston Marathon. They are an Air Guard family that embodies our values and are the very fabric of our force. They want to serve their community and their nation and we are stronger because of them. I am very proud of this family and of this great young man.

This is your Air National Guard.

In closing, we all recognize that our military's current fiscal uncertainty is a daunting issue. As our United States Air Force works diligently to balance modernization, recapitalization and readiness, our priorities and enduring contributions remain unchanged. The National Guard has not changed in 200-something years with regard to how we face problems, how we look at things from a militia construct, how we support our total force, how we support our nation.

America's interests will continue to be defended by the Guard Airmen who answer our nation's call whenever, wherever we're needed. Our Air Force is committed to providing flexible and decisive air power for America and our Air National Guard will be a steadfast partner in this total force effort.

I thank you for your time. I look forward to your questions.

Moderator: Thank you, sir. A number of good questions here, I think.

Let's start off with how are decisions made in Washington, whether to change missions at a particular Guard unit, remove aircraft, change the mission, it seems to be occurring a lot and you hear stories, anyway, of some units that have changed missions several times. I don't know if that's true or not. And what happens to the Airmen you have there who are rooted in the civilian world and their skill sets don't meet the new mission?

Lt. Gen. Clarke: The one thing I can tell you is that mission churn is hard, changing from one mission to another. But because we're an experienced work force, we have the ability to take Airmen and move them from one mission set to another mission set fairly rapidly and efficiently. In other words, you take a bunch of experienced Airmen, ask them to pick up a new mission, they go off to tech school, they come back, and they do a great job with that. That is proven time and time again in multiple mission sets we have been able to accomplish that. I didn't say it was easy. I just said that we do it and we do it very well when we're asked to do it.

The fact that we stood up the ISR network that we have in this nation today as rapidly as we did during wartime, I think a lot of it goes to the fact that we took experienced Airmen and asked them to switch over to something else, all during that change and in wartime operations.

Moderator: Do you think Title 32 language should be revised or expanded to facilitate a greater force integration? And there might not all be Guardsmen in here so you might want to explain what Title 32 is.

Lt. Gen. Clarke: Sure. The Title 32 construct allows -- The chain of command, if you will, for Guardsmen runs through the Adjutants General to the governors of the states. This goes all the way back to the Jefferson/Adams debates of our nation about states versus the large federal government. In the end we ended up with a construct that allows for us to have militia units throughout the nation.

As far as restructuring and all that, we're pretty satisfied from the Guard perspective. I don't hear any complaints from the governors about how things are set up. You may hear complaints from others about how they don't like the system, but this is the history of our nation that we're talking about, and how we were stood up, and the fact that they, I think I just gave all the evidence in the stories and the background to how we support that with the uniqueness of this Title 32 construct and being able to flip over to the Title 10 and then back to Title 32. We do that all the time.

Air National Guard - AFA - 9/17/13

Today there are 5,500 plus Airmen on Title 10 orders around the nation and overseas doing missions for the Air Force and for the nation.

Moderator: In response to one of the comments you made about community-based forces, the writer here says, clearly they have value but it still seems like a stretch to give governors management/leadership responsibilities for fighters, tankers and other high end air power capabilities. I've also heard the argument that would it not be of more utility to governors to have land forces, Army forces, in their state missions versus Airmen?

Lt. Gen. Clarke: We think there ought to be both. We think there ought to be a construct by which there are some land forces available to the governor, and air forces. But for the Air Force and for the nation, I think it's keystone that in many states the only Air Force, or I would say air component presence, is the Air National Guard. You pull that out, you just pulled out the interest of possibly a governor and a couple of senators in that state about the United States Air Force. So if you keep drawing back out of all these locations and not have it disbursed across the nation, it goes counter to the things like the Abrams Doctrine. It goes counter to General Dempsey's comments about a month or two ago in the news about staying connected with America. You keep withdrawing out of places like that, you'll find out you'll become very disconnected.

We find ourselves as probably the most connected force to America there is in the National Guard.

Moderator: We haven't talked about the big S word today, sequestration. Can you talk about how your Guard units dealt with that? I think most people are aware that although one guy might be launching an airplane in his Guard capacity on the weekend, but he's also launching the same airplane in a civilian technician capacity during the week. And how do furloughs impact you?

Lt. Gen. Clarke: We had some impact from the furloughs and sequestration overall. The largest impact to the Guard -- We did not ground squadrons, by the way. We were able to sustain it. Our flying account money is separate from the regular Air Force. However, we have really backed out of a lot of the training things we used to do, whether it's missile shoots, Red Flag, those kinds of things, large force deployment. We have backed out of those. I sense, anyway, that we're not as connected as the total force from that training perspective as we used to be. So that's been a big impact.

Air National Guard - AFA - 9/17/13

Further, we've cut out a lot of the connectivity things, face-to-face engagements, conferences, the TDYs we used to do. I didn't travel for three and a half months after I got in this job. Just realizing the impact of sequestration.

There's a little bit of the baby that gets thrown out with the bathwater when you don't have face-to-face contact with people. I think that's important. Particularly when you're trying to convey messages about, as a force, things like sexual assault, discrimination, those types of things. That's something that I always believed has to be done face-to-face. Sending our videos, PowerPoint, whatever. Making people do computer-based training modules. That's ineffective. It takes personal engagement, face-to-face contact with people talking about messages, carrying on themes that you need to do in sessions like this.

Moderator: Speaking of technology and training, what are the Air National Guard's plans for air combat, live virtual constructive training? And thank you for defining that acronym for me.

Lt. Gen. Clarke: As resources come available, we like that construct of being connected and being able to do that. The live virtual constructive training. We like that, we want to be a bigger part of it. We just don't know if there's going to be enough funding in the near term here to get into that. Maybe more in the outer years, we'll be able to do some more and connect more. So we have plans and we plan to utilize them once the resources match up with the construct.

Also I'm in big favor, by the way, if anybody in industry is listening, I'm in big favor of not putting simulators in brick and mortar institutions. I think simulators ought to be on flatbeds and you haul them around to different places wherever you need them, or put them in the back of a C-17 and carry them somewhere. Once you anchor that simulator there it's very hard to move it somewhere else, so if there is a mission change or something it becomes more difficult.

When I was a cadet in ROTC at McConnell Air Force Base in 1978 I remember climbing on a train car there and inside was a KC-135 simulator in the train car. Strategic Air Command used to move that simulator around on the train track to different locations to train people. We can still do that today on the back of a flatbed, moving things around from location to location, and certainly if it's modular enough to put in the back of a C-17, carry it somewhere else. So I'm in favor of not putting those simulators in the future inside of brick and mortar places.

Moderator: With active cutbacks in research and development, any thoughts to the Air National Guard picking up some of the R&D

Air National Guard - AFA - 9/17/13

roles and investments? If so, in what areas would you think that would make sense?

Lt. Gen. Clarke: We partner with the Air Force on that. The Air Force has always had the lead on research and development. We obviously get to share our ideas with the Air Force on research and development. So all of our stuff matches up with them. We may have some differences of opinion about things sometimes, but overall, we work for the best solution for the total force. We have to if we want to be seamless.

Moderator: A policy question for you.

The current Air National Guard policy that prohibits incentive and familiarization flights makes sense for fighter units, however the mobility wings, this policy makes little sense because many, if not all, sorties can be flown with incentive packs on board and no mission impact. Can that be reworked? Any exceptions for that?

Lt. Gen. Clarke: There are a lot of things under sequestration that we're not doing, as I mentioned before. And some of the policy things are based on fiscal responsibilities. Some of it's on safety. Some of it's on just good common sense. But I'm happy to review any of those policies just to make sure that it does the right thing by our total force. That includes extending stuff out to families and others to make sure they feel like they really are part of what's going on.

That's something that's keystone to us too, is our families. I had a good friend who told me once that, it was a traditional Guardsman, had been a traditional Guardsman his entire career for about 30 years. He said that he found that if he kept his family, the Guard and his employer all equally ticked off together at the same level, he was doing a great job. So I think incentive flights help mitigate some of that.

Moderator: Can you talk about how the KC-46 essentially is going to be integrated into the Guard and do you have any timelines or anything on keeping the total force tanker fleet healthy?

Lt. Gen. Clarke: One of the great things about our nation is our mobility efforts and the tanker is keystone to that. We're proud to be involved in that mission set in a heavy way with all of our KC-135s and we're looking forward to replacement tankers as they come. KC-46, we already have one preferred alternative bed-down location at Pease. Again, that used to be a state that had a large Air Force presence. We pulled out what's left of the Air National Guard there at Pease. We have an active association at that base and they're going to do a great job of transitioning over to the KC-46 and any future ones.

I'll tell you though, I recently visited our Guard unit at Scott Air Force Base. They have nine KC-135s there. What was remarkable to me is every single one of them was flyable on the flight line. These airplanes, the youngest one was a 1964 model; the oldest one was a 1958 model. I'm a '58 model myself. [Laughter]. Although I keep myself in pretty good shape, these Airmen were doing a great job.

And by the way, a lot of credit goes to the Air Force for their overall approach to weapon system sustainment across the Guard, Reserve and the regular Air Force. They do an outstanding job of keeping these airplanes flying.

It's sad that we have airplanes that old, but on the other hand, these airplanes, I promise you, not a one of them was in the hangar. They were all out there on the flight line ready to be launched for an exercise. It was amazing.

Moderator: Thank you very much for our presentation.

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