

TRANSCRIPT

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THIS IS A RUSH TRANSCRIPT AND MAY CONTAIN ERRORS. USERS ARE ADVISED TO CONSULT THEIR OWN TAPES OR NOTES OF THE SESSION IF ABSOLUTE VERIFICATION OF WORDING IS NEEDED.

Q: Let's talk about the Army force expansion. I read the transcript from the session at the Pentagon. A lot of the folks were there. I had a couple of specific questions. You didn't really talk about the composition of what is going to be added--there's going to be six new brigades. Are these generic brigades? Are they going to be focused more towards the low end of the conflict spectrum or what?

A: Let me put the question in kind of a broader context to kind of give us (inaudible) review as we're looking at it right now. As we're developing the Army for this year and out through the middle teens of this century, a couple of thoughts. First, in the near term, the plus-up or the surge is our initial focus. As you know, that involves five brigade combat teams that we're essentially accelerating in terms of their progress to get them into the combat zone in time to make a difference here in this effort that the President has communicated as we try to put some stability into Baghdad. So, that is an important mission for us in the near term, and I mention that because it sets the context for everything else we're doing.

Now, our focus essentially has been, these were units that we planned to bring into combat sometime this year. But now, what we've had to do is accelerate that process. The goal then is to make sure that the equipping timelines support the training timelines, support the deployment timelines, because one of the things Gen. Schoomaker made very clear is we're not going to sacrifice the overall readiness of these brigades just because we're now moving them faster than we'd originally planned. So for all of us in the Army staff right now working with Forces Command, this is a big

challenge because we have to ensure that commanders have confidence that they're getting what they need when they need it.

The Forces Command working with the Army G-3 has made adjustments and refinements to the training program to get that alliance so that we can meet these new dates for possible deployment. So that's the near term focus, and the thing that I'm very proud about is the robustness that we have in the Army onboarding base and also in the defense infrastructure enables us now to accelerate this without risking the force. If you would have asked me a year or two ago how we could do this, we would have been sorely challenged if it was possible at all. Now what I can show you is when you're talking night-vision goggles, when you're talking the basics of command and control, when you're talking the basics of individual crew-served weapons, we have them in adequate quantities, we're getting them in adequate time to support (inaudible) accelerated training plan. That's important, and then the other thing we have is we'll have additional property available over in Iraq and Kuwait so that we can greet them with what we call theater-provided equipment and get that to them in adequate quantity, so they'll have all the force protection equipment they need. And that's thousands; we're talking over 5,000 (inaudible) humvees ready in sequence for these brigades. We're talking a similar number of jamming devices, thousands of crew-served weapons, so this is a big deal, and one that is being very carefully orchestrated in essentially sequence so that it sees brigades coming, we can do it.

The next thing we'll do then is we'll focus on your point, which is, what do we do when we get this to permanent increase, and the permanent increase is a factor of two things. In the near term, what we'll do effective this spring, we'll accelerate the creation of two brigade combat teams that we planned to bring online in the next several years, that we're now bringing online faster. So there's nothing new about this in the sense that the numbers haven't changed, it's the rate and the speed with which we're doing it. And once again, because we're doing it this spring with the plan that they'll be available for combat a year later, a major focus is we look at the manning and the equipping of these forces to get them ready.

Now, the next thing in the sequence then is to be able to look at the overall growth of the Army. I thought the Secretary of Defense in his press conference laid it out very, very clearly, and gave us essentially our operating framework. What he said was that what we're going to do is we're going to grow six brigade combat teams. Now, the important point that the Army has made is those six brigade combat teams won't grow by themselves. They will grow with appropriate supporting structure. Now, that supporting structure is not overhead. The supporting structure is the hard-earned lessons of this war, which is you create the necessary additional critical combat multipliers; its MPs, its engineers. It's the stuff that enables us to add sustainment and capability on this new battlefield we're operating in. And so what the Army essentially is now refined with the

Office of the Secretary of Defense's staff, is a plan that essentially grows us steadily over this time. In other words, as we bring the brigade combat team on essentially at an annual rate, what we're also doing is linking with it the appropriate structure to make these brigade combat teams viable; adequate MPs, adequate engineers, adequate other elements of the force to include logistics.

And so that's the basic plan that we're working on right now and we've briefed it to elements in the Office of the Secretary of Defense. I think we have a shared vision of how we're doing it, and then the other thing we've done is we've been able to align the rest of the Army to be able to build this force generation capability. It means a bigger workload for training doctrine command. It means a bigger workload for our recruiters. As you look at the challenge that we're about to face, we're going to have to sustain both very, very high retention within the Army, and we're also going to have to sustain a very vigorous recruiting plan. We think all of this is achievable. As the Chief testified, what we have essentially is a conservative plan that he believes we have very high confidence we can execute. So that's the basic outline of what we're trying to do, near, mid, and long-term.

Q: But the new brigades that will be brought on, are you making a turn more towards preparing for the low end of the conflict spectrum, or are they going to be just six more brigades like the other brigades?

A: They will be six more brigades.

Q: Not oriented towards the low end of the conflict spectrum?

A: The structure and composition of the brigade essentially is prepared to operate across the spectrum of conflict. The issue then becomes, how do you prepare it in its training program? And how do you essentially tailor its equipping program? Right now, our brigades are tailored and focused for essentially a low-intensity conflict operation. And the Chief has testified that what we don't have right now is brigades that are prepared for the high end, and that's the risk that we're taking as a nation right now--that we are focusing our brigade combat teams for the mission at hand. And so right now until the mission changes, we will go ahead and continue to focus our training program on the mission at hand.

The other part of this thing is what we've made clear to the leadership is that if we get more brigade combat teams, the forces that are essentially in the ready stack, which is the stack that's not deployed but is at a high level of manning and equipping, can now then begin to undertake high-intensity conflict training so that if we had major ground combat at the high end of the spectrum, we'd have forces that are much more ready for it. So the benefit to all of this is more than just we have more brigades available on an

annual basis. It means that we have a greater possibility to prepare for the high end as well as the low end of the combat spectrum. We get more time and we get more assets, and those are the critical things that'll make a big difference to us.

Q: So the brigades can flex?

A: You see the big benefit that we've had that I think we've all seen now is the interchangeability of brigades, the lack of old theater unique brigades that were not interchangeable is enormously important. What we just did this last November-December in Iraq was enormous. We took a division out of Fort Hood called the 1st Cavalry Division and moved it in and replaced its light type unit, which had the same level of modernization, the same kinds of equipment, and we left most of the equipment in place. We didn't have many, many ships flowing back and forth--what we did essentially is move some command and control equipment and support equipment, but the bulk of the combat vehicles remained in place. We did that because these organizations are now interchangeable. And so we believe that right now common design and the ability to operate at all ends of the combat spectrum is what we're building in these brigades, is really important.

Q: To the extent that Americans might have a general belief that because of the difficulties that (inaudible) in the country in Iraq, we're going to expand the Army to be able, and the expansion is going to be troops that can do that sort of thing focused on peacekeeping, low-intensity type operations, that's not correct?

A: They will be capable of doing that....

Q: But not oriented specifically towards that?

A: No, not exclusively. In other words, what we have is a process in the Army where we respond essentially to the Joint Staff, and we produce forces as required. The ability that you'll have with this force growth is to have more of them to be able to meet more demands. In other words, what we all worry about right now is, right now our focus is in an obvious combat scenario. What if we have another combat scenario or need for forces in substantial degree? That's where we've all testified America's taking risk. So we'll have more of them. But the other point is, when you have more, you can now do a better job in preparing and training them. And so we would expect that in the outyears as we actually bring these brigades online, America could look at the forces that have not deployed and know that they have the right equipment, a higher level of training, and a greater variety of training.

Q: Two questions. Numbers--what rate are you retaining your soldiers currently at, and what will that increase to because you said there'll be an increase in retention? And the

immediate change in the National Guard and Reserve length of deployment to 12 months is causing people to tear their hair out because what that essentially translates to is these units only having seven to 10 months in theater. Therefore, you have to move up other DCTs and what I'm told is that it's going to have (inaudible) out to '09 and that this wasn't run through the lower levels of the people that actually work those numbers; they were just sort of handed it and said "make this work." Could you talk about that? What practical impact the 12 months has and what that means for the active Army who actually has to spend 12 months boots on the ground?

A: Two typically challenging questions. Let me address the first one. As we look at what we have to do to maintain this Army growth trajectory we've outlined, what do we have to do? We have to keep an enlisted recruiting profile of a little bit over 80,000 per year. We also have to retain about 60,000 per year. Both of those figures are well within reach and are consistent with our recent experience.

Q: And that's 60,000 at the lowest level?

A: Yes, of our enlisted force. So we think that right now, the growth profile that the Chief outlined in his initial testimony is as he says conservative, and supported by recent experience, and is sustainable, and it's also sustainable in the context that the Marine Corps is growing at the same time. So we have to be able to work with the nation's population. We have to ensure that we build a force that will engender the confidence to keep doing what we're doing. But we certainly have a good record.

Now the next part of your question is I think very important. I would first like to offer one point. As we talk about stress on the force, and you alluded to the challenge of synchronizing this new concept of reserve component availability, why are we doing it? The point that we're doing it is that right now, the percentage of the force that you can attribute to the reserve component is down to 20 percent of our total deployed force. Why is that? It's because under the pre-existing mobilization rules, what we had was essentially a policy that enabled us to only go after volunteers on an individual basis to fill the flags that we needed to go back for another term in combat. Now the active force right now, as you know, is essentially at one year on, one year off, and the off obviously is no year off. It's a year essentially of reset and then preparing to go back again--frankly, just simply not supportable. So the dilemma for the nation became, how do we realign our access to the reserve component to do two things--to increase the reserve component's contribution to this war over the long term, but second, to provide flexibility in terms of how we do it and predictability in how we do it. And so the concept essentially says that the current plan that we've been operating under says that for a year, boots on the ground for a reserve component unit, you're going to spend somewhere around 18 to 20 months mobilized. That means away from your home and family and away from your job. I think everybody agreed that although you were getting

a year boots on the ground, the price was too high. We couldn't sustain that kind of utilization of the reserve component.

So what you have now essentially is a compromise--it says what we're going to do is we're going to try to do everything we can in one year. Now, the issue then becomes that in return what we get is predictable access to reserve component units, the whole unit, instead of trying to build a unit at the individual level. Because part of the problem with reserve component readiness over the last year or two has been the search for volunteers essentially has been a nationwide search. It gives you a unit that has no synchronization; everybody's (inaudible) themselves at the mobilization station. So the concept now says, we mobilize a unit, there is much greater level of integration within that unit, and also much better both individual and collective training before they're mobilized. So then what we're able to do move them much more quickly to a state of readiness, and the stated goal right now is that we're going to get something between seven to 10 months boots on the ground, and then what you have is the reverse side of that particular period. You also have to allow for some amount of what we call de-mob, which essentially is the return from combat, the post-stress training, and then the release to the civilian world.

So, what we're now doing is taking an enormous horse blanket of forces that we have, and as you alluded, now doing the backfill. In other words, no longer are we counting on a unit being boots on the ground for a year if it's reserve component. We're now looking at something less than that, and what we've got to do then is plan their backfill, which will either be an AC unit or an RC unit, but the point is that we now have much greater access to the reserve component. Once we get this horse blanket smoothed out, much greater predictability for the reserve component, and frankly, a much more quality in terms of how we're composing the force, because frankly the burden was formed misproportionately on the active component. And what we weren't able to do is provide a measure of predictability and access to the reserve component, so this is a compromise. I think it's a wise compromise, I think it's executable. As you alluded, there's a lot of smoothing now that we've got to do to the force flow to get that ready, and the G-3 in collaboration with Forces Command, is doing that, in collaboration with the Director of the Army Guard and the Chief of the Army Reserve.

Q: On the 60,000, what kind of changes that from before? Were you retaining 50 or--?

A: That's consistent with our existing track record.

Q: So you're not increasing the number that you're retaining?

A: No, not (inaudible). But I'm not a personal expert, but this is very consistent of where we've been.

Q: Can you talk about the budget implications of two strains here--one, last year, the Army said they're going to need between 12 and 13 billion dollars for the next couple of years, one in Iraq, and then two at least two years later for reset? Has that number changed? Has that projection changed? And I have a followup.

A: Good question. The answer is, if we put more forces on the ground in Iraq, the requirement to reset those forces when they come back will increase. The simple calculus has been this--when we had a plan to essentially reset 12 brigade combat teams, and it's a mathematical process of taking every weapon, every night vision goggle, and every combat vehicle, and putting it through some kind of a process to restore it to as best as we can to like new condition, or usable for the next rotation. More brigades means more equipment, means more money. And we're doing those calculations now. And we'll essentially update the calculus as we put more forces into the mix.

Q: Is there any rough estimate; will the 13 billion go up to 15 or 16, or you don't have a sense yet?

A: I don't have a sense yet, but I think those numbers are generally accurate.

Q: Okay, you've got that trend, and then you want to grow the Army by six brigades...

A: With their associated forces.

Q: Applying a top line increase is quite dramatic--your 110 billion this year went to 121 billion. What are the broad budgetary implications? I know you don't want to talk specific '08, but reset troops, support troops, that's a hell of a lot of money for a service that has not traditionally gotten a major increase, so give us a sense of that.

A: Absolutely. You have addressed a topic that has been focus of major Army leadership interaction with the Office of the Secretary of Defense for the past nine months. As you know, the question about the alignment of strategy, the QDR, with our actual current requirements, has been an issue that we have essentially raised early on in our POM process about 10 months ago, worked through the summer and fall, and are now in a process of adjusting again. What did we say? We said essentially that we're being asked to do more than the strategy, and we weren't resourced for the strategy. What we had was a practice where essentially we brought in all of the folks above us that hadn't looked at our books, so what we had is open books for a period of about three months, when they went through all of our planning (inaudible). And then that lead to an increase in the overall funding that was afforded the Army. It wasn't everything we asked for, but it was a substantial improvement. And what it enabled us to do was you took a look at the base program with supplementals, to say that we believe we can meet

the needs in our war.

Now, the next thing we're alluding to is we're now growing the Army, and what we have done now is made the preliminary estimates for what it's going to take for us to grow the Army. And what we're doing is updating our financial planning. Now, you noticed the way I sequenced the discussion. The growth of the Army is not immediate. In other words, initially it's surge, then it's acceleration, and frankly, those are existing plans with minor modifications. So then what you have to do is update your long-term plan, which essentially would be our POM for the period 9-13. And so what that'll do is see then a reflection of the update to our overall plan and trajectory.

Right now, we're on track. We'll have adequate financial resources, so long as we get our base program approved, and we get the submissions that we've made for the supplemental in both '07 and '08 because importantly, I think everybody ought to realize that what we've done now is complied with the Office of the Secretary of Defense, whose in turn complied with OMB and Congress, to submit both a base program and a set program together. And so what's happening now, you see, is we've been hard at work for the last four-five months now not just preparing this POM, but also preparing the supp. request for 7 and the supp. request for 8, all of which have to go in essentially integrated, so we're able to cross-reference what we're asking for under what justification to both meet the needs of war, to meet the needs of resetting from war, and then also meet the needs of growth. So we've done all that, and you're right--it will be a substantial increase in the Army's overall total. But the exact percentage of how much will be in the near-term base program and how much will be a supplemental program is something that frankly is above us. But we've made the requests, we think it's legitimate, we think we're going to be supported in broad measure because the numbers are what they are.

Q: What are the preliminary estimates to grow the Army broadly since it's not going to be part of the '08 budget, you're not giving anything away, but annually and then cumulatively, is there a sense you're going to--?

A: Let me just generally talk about this Army growth as we talk about moving to a 547. We talk about going six brigade combat teams and their appropriate supporting structure, and then the base structure in the Army. What you're looking at in terms of equipment is about 18 billion dollars' worth of equipment. What you're looking at in terms of the associated requirements for infrastructure, for training, for all of the things that are required, is a gross total of about 70 billion dollars, spread over the period of the POM.

Q: On top of the 18?

A: On top of the pre-existing plan. In other words, to build this additional capability, that's approximately what you're talking about.

Q: 18 and 70?

A: No, 18 within the 70.

Q: Does that include health care benefits?

A: That is a total requirement to both address the manpower, the infrastructure, and the rest of the associated requirements.

Q: And that'll be reflected roughly in the '08-'09 through '14 POM, or '13 POM?

A: Yes. '09 through 13, and we'll make the appropriate adjustments in other documents, which essentially are requests for supplemental funding to get us started. And those adjustments have been made.

Q: You assuming a (inaudible) increase, or will the Navy and the Air Force be asked to, budgets be asked to shrink?

A: Well, you asked a very important question and one that Gen. Schoomaker has been real clear on. We're not into a zero-sum game, in which we're trying to take from the other services. What the Chief has said is we need a healthy and robust other service contribution to this fight. What we're asking for then is that America to make a decision about priorities, and it is a comparative. Two years ago, we spent more on the holidays, Christmas, than we did on national defense. So it's an issue of how much does America want to put into defense, not our capability to do it.

Q: The fact that the reserve components will be in theater for just nine months

A: No, you chose that figure, I didn't. Seven to 10.

Q: Something different than 12, will that mean that they'll be able to, will they easily take the place of an active unit that (inaudible) as a part of multinational division north. Or will they have to be theater support, or will they be able to take the role of an active duty brigade combat division, given the different deployment time?

A: Absolutely. I think you've seen theaters as well as I. I think that the process we have in terms of training the synchronization (inaudible) we call (inaudible) assumption of mission and then the passing of that mission to the next force is something that is really irrespective of where you come from, which (inaudible) of the force. So I don't think

there'll be any need to have some kind of a separate mission just because you're not there for a full year. I mean, the end state of all of this is this--the Secretary has testified that one of the things he wants to do is move away from one year boots on the ground. None of us like this--it's a horrendously long time to be deployed. The requirements right now say that we're going to have to keep the active force deployed for a year. But there's nothing magic about a year in our mind except the current requirements right now for forces. So we will use and integrate reserve component forces across the framework of the battlefield, and I would see no difference.

Q: Will the shorter boots on the ground by the reserve forces lead to a, will that put additional pressure to make the active duty tours shorter, more like the Marine Corps tours, do you think?

A: I don't think so. At this point, what we have made is an important projection which is, if the demand for forces continues as it is, what we need is frankly more active component brigades to try to get from what is our current red line, which is just one-to-one. As you know, we originally defined the requirement as one-to-three, that it was one deployed, three non-deployed. Then because we've recognized the surge requirement, we said the planning horizons would be one-to-two. Now, we're at our red line, which is one-to-one. So this has been a steady realignment of Army force generation based upon the needs of war. And so, we'll stay where we are because we have no choice. Ultimately, when you take a look at what you do when you get to the end of this period of growth, you have more flexibility; you have more brigade combat teams available, and conceivably, we can then talk about doing something to the tour lines.

Q: Can you just follow up on that length of deployment subject? As opposed to prompting the active duty to follow suit and stay a shorter time, could it have the reverse effect and force them to stay a longer time than a year?

A: I don't think so. The reality right now is part of the way we're achieving this plus-up in forces is we are extending formations. I note both active and Guard; the 1st and 34th out of Minnesota is a Guard formation that's being extended right now. So the reality of the current time is that for selected units, we're having to extend them on an individual basis, individual unit basis, more than a year. So we're not close to being able to talk about backing off of that for the force as a whole. We're stuck with the law of numbers right now, which demands a steady flow of about 23 brigade combat teams. What we needed to do was provide a better way for the nation to access the reserve component. This new policy does that, enables us much greater predictability, much greater access to the reserve component, and I think we'll do a lot to address the balance of force contribution with the active component as playing.

Q: Two questions. Give us a sense of how big the backlog is (inaudible). Then secondly,

you mentioned with the new brigade combat teams, you mentioned engineers, MPs, and so on. Does that mean you're bringing more combat service (inaudible) into the active force and the Reserves and the National Guard?

A: Let me first take the question of our planning for the resetting of the force. There is an image that says that we have an enormous backlog. As we came out of this last fiscal year, what we identified to the nation was a requirement for about four billion dollars' worth of equipment that was not reset last year because the funding was not provided. But when you go for example to a place like Anniston, and you see row upon row of tanks. What we have to make clearer to you and to other visitors is, all those tanks are not waiting reset. Some of them are waiting foreign military sale; some of them are waiting demilitarization; and some of them are in fact in line to get reset. And so, the fact that we've got for example substantial numbers of heavy armored vehicles that are waiting at some depot or arsenal doesn't necessarily mean that they're awaiting workload. That fact is hard to explain to the casual observer who just sees a huge park of vehicles out there.

What we have tried to do essentially is modulate the flow of equipment coming back from theater, so that what we're doing is we're eating the elephant one bite at a time. Example, the first elephant we've been in the process of digesting for about the last four months has been the 101st Airborne. They came back in the late fall, and they were the first chunk of capability we had to eat in return. The next was much less frankly because the 4th Infantry Division, as I mentioned, benefited substantially from the fact that they were able to draw off 1st Cavalry Division equipment that was left here in country. We didn't have to move all the equipment back and forth, so the reset burden for that unit was much less than the experience we had two or three years ago, when we were moving entire unit sets back and forth. But frankly the reset of the 4th Infantry Division is something we're eating right now. And so, what you're seeing over time is the simple mechanical process of grabbing the weapons, grabbing the night vision sites, grabbing the command and control equipment from the unit as they come back, and eating it then through America's depots and arsenals and in local repair.

Part of the magic of this process is we're now identifying essentially over in either Kuwait or Iraq where the destination is for the repair of that particular component. So, a truck, a tank, a Bradley, all the major end items, we're not shipping back and forth across the country. There's essentially an analysis done of the combat status of that particular platform or its fleet. We are then making batch decisions or individual decisions in shipping them directly back to a particular location for repair here in the States. All of a design to speed it back to a unit because when you're only gone from combat about 11 or 12 months, we can't screw around anymore taking eight or nine months to get your stuff back to you, it's got to be a nearly instantaneous process.

The next part of that is, that we have much greater capability in our both AMCs depots and arsenals and also domestic industry, so what we're able to do is do much tighter turns on equipment now because of what we're able to do. So the idea that we have substantial quantities of equipment right now that is essentially sitting waiting in a cue forever is wrong. The typical thing you'll see, for example, a humvee is, we'll keep about two months' worth of humvees waiting, and two months' worth of humvees is an appropriate kind of an inventory given the irregularity of ships, surges, combat requirements, etcetera. And then the matrix is to get them out and get the plan then for where those several hundred humvees are going to the next unit in the cue, and getting them ready for training. And all of it is synchronized by what is the requirement for a unit to support their training to return into combat?

The other part of it that we've had to synchronize is trying to increase the homeland defensive capability of American forces, which as you know, in the continental United States, has been sorely attrited. We're at about 40 percent levels of equipping in the continental United States for the forces that are not deployed out of the Guard and Reserve. We've got to raise those up, so where we can then, we're trying to make sure that we're shipping reset equipment that is not immediately needed by somebody who's going back to theater, to essentially reinforce that.

Q: (Inaudible). How much of the equipment actually could be handed over to (inaudible)?

A: We've looked at that very carefully. Essentially the building pattern that we're seeing is a heavy combat track vehicle is certainly good for two years in that combat environment with the current maintenance practices and support that we have in combat. And so that's the planning factor we're operating on. We took a very careful measure of where we were in terms of the reset requirements, and we're able to adjust those. What we're now doing is essentially we have a plan that goes out, for example, for tanks and Bradleys, out through about FY11. We're synchronizing a brigade set two years in combat, bringing it back; essentially it spends 18 months in repair reset because it's a major process that you take the turret off, take the track and suspension off, put it all back together at an improved level of readiness, and return it to a unit in time to train for them to then go back in combat about 18 months later.

And so we've thought this process through essentially at the brigade level, by fleet, and we're out right now to about FY11, so our reset plan right now has some major elements of industrial investment that stretch out a year- and-a-half, two years. The tank and Bradley we're bringing back today will re-enter the force about a year-and-a-half from now, and we have thought through the synchronization of that.

Q: Last week, you had some hearings, some closed-door hearings at the House

Appropriations Committee's defense (inaudible). Take us inside. What was the tone of the questions? What were some of the things they were asking you? What were some of the takeaways you had? And then, a follow-up on his question, Secretary Harvey yesterday said that he was assuming some risk in the combat service/combat service support (inaudible) strength increase, and sort of (inaudible)?

A: First, the hearings were classified. They were very, very frank. I think members of Congress who asked questions asked them at a level of frankly great interest, great support, and a very, very high level of sophistication. The American public has learned one heck of a lot about how to sustain a force in combat over the long term. So what we dealt with first was their questions. Are we sending soldiers into harm's way, unready and unprotected? I think we answered their questions to their satisfaction. The next question they asked us was, what will the readiness of the rest of the Army be when we finish this surge? And it was a legitimate question, because what we've testified is, we've had to work hard to get these forces ready. So their obvious question is: What is the level of risk that we're assuming with the rest of the force, and how do we address it? Our answer is that we have a plan right now that essentially will continue to backfill those forces that we're surging.

What we first thanked them for was the 17.1 billion that we got last summer, because that investment that they made then, in equipment, in reset, enables us to meet the surge, but also to build the next generation of combat capability. And then we asked them for immediate support for supplemental funding. And essentially the supplemental funding, that's the FY07 main supp. we'll need by about April. And so that's the other part of what we're going to continue to work on, which is help and support for supplemental funding. So those were the mechanics of our discussion, frankly very focused, very concerned about our readiness, and very supportive. And so, I think we answered their questions. I think they're satisfied with our plan. And at the same time, they promised they're going to continue to give us very close scrutiny, which I think they ought to.

Q: And the combat service and combat service support?

A: Combat service and service support--the Army has had a basic challenge, which is we have done what we call the TAA process, which is a look at the total Army. We have always assumed some element of risk in combat support service support, and the question then is, as we grow the Army with a focus on tooth, are we in some way neglecting those elements? And our answer is no, that although we'll take some amount of risk, we won't build all of the CS/CSS we'd like. I've specifically (inaudible) to the kinds of capabilities we are building, so when the Secretary of Defense said, "more tooth than tail," I think we all understand that in today's combat, an MP and a combat engineer is just as much a part of tooth as an infantryman.

Q: (Inaudible). What is the future of the global security situation? (Inaudible.)

A: I think what we now have is, it's almost "back to the future." We are what we are. If we had any thoughts that the current demand for forces was in some way temporary, I think we're disabused of that idea. The experience of this war has been that there's been a steady state demand for force (inaudible), the Army capability to provide them, and so now what we have done is we have realigned both our access to the reserve component and then our plan to grow capability to the current reality. And what we see is, that this century is going to be a century in which the need for ground forces is going to continue. We don't think this is a temporary phenomenon.

In other words, the term that Gen. Abizaid coined which is this is the "Long War." What we think is the reality that we ought to frame and shape American views about the kind of ground force they want. And so what that means then is that we need to have a force that not only can provide on a steady state basis somewhere around 23 brigade combat teams a year, but also has the capability to surge in another direction. And that's the part of the focus that has been lost; the ability to surge forces, and then the other thing that we also need to address is the ability to do more than counterinsurgency. And so, those are the kind of risk assessments that the senior leadership made, and I think made the correct decision. We needed to adjust our defense policies in light of the lessons of this war.

Q: Quick question on the 70 billion dollars--that is, you said, is for the '08 through '13 POM. Does that include unit-equipping costs and all of that, so it's the actual total bill?

A: That is a preliminary estimate.

Q: Correction, the general said '09 to '13.

Q: OK, it's 09 to 13?

A: Yes, and so it's 9 to 13, and that's a total cost. It is a preliminary estimate, understanding that essentially we're in our preliminary definition of units, unit timelines, and frankly, you can figure for yourself, that the focus, for example, of what installations these units could be located on is also still to be worked. So I wanted to give you a ballpark estimate of what we think is the general amount of the bill, and that bill that I gave you, about 70 billion dollars, includes about 18 billion dollars for equipping. So I wanted to kind of frame how much is hard investment in equipment and how much is all the other elements of support.

Q: And then that won't actually be in the (inaudible) budget until 2009, it will be in the--

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A: Well we're at a very interesting point right now, as you know. We're an Army that over the course of this war has been supported in large measure by supplemental funding to address the needs of war. The needs of war in the near term will be the surge and it will be the acceleration of forces. So, our supplemental strategy is focused on meeting those requirements in addition to the base budget. The next thing we're focusing on then would be the update to our budget, would be the 9-13, what we call, change proposal. It'll be something we'll submit here in the late summer. And so you would expect then that when that is reviewed and supported by the Office of the Secretary of Defense, it'll then be the latest update. It'll be submitted about a year from now to the Congress.

Q: I wonder if you could address a question I've been thinking about is, are you going to have to rob Peter to pay Paul out of future systems, future equipment, new equipment for the forces that we have and the forces that we'll be gaining?

A: Absolutely not. No, that is a very, very clear question and one that the Army leadership has only one answer to. The answer I gave you. Why? We recognize right now that for those who look at the amount of support that the Army is getting to fight this war, the question would be: Why don't we take and make a sacrifice in the outyears? Can we delay or defer this vision of a future combat system so that what we're able to do is invest more in the current force? I'd look at it, frankly, as a father. As a father, I look at what is being asked of my sons as they go into conflict and think, although the equipment they are operating today is adequate for the current fight, it is not the ultimate equipment that American soldiers ought to go war with. It certainly won't be the state-of-the-art stuff that we ought to have by about 2020.

And so if we're going to change the reality of fighting in 2020, we have to plan now. And so, the Army has a very carefully thought out strategy. It essentially is investing heavily right now in early developmental efforts. They're coming online extremely well; we have enormous promise. When you think of what we'll have, a common network across the whole fighting force, a common set of ground platforms. When I went with the 4th Infantry Division to Iraq, I was astounded at the inefficiency of all these different systems without a common framework for logistics, without common repair parts, and without modern reliability. You know if you put it in terms of your family car, look at what you're operating now versus what you were operating 20 years ago in terms of basic reliability. How many tune-ups does the latest car that you have require annually? That's the kind of antiquity we're struck with right now in today's fighting forces. It's simply not viable for the future, so if it's not viable, we're going to have to invest now, and the American country I think owes us the very best so that we can put Americans who go to war in 2020 in the best. And that's what FCS is all about.

Q: Gen. Schoomaker has talked about a 100-billion shortfall in procurement, and he also talked about a 56-billion in shortfall in procurement. Can you clarify what is the current number, and is the increase that you're immediately requesting for the next POM, is that going to offset how much of the shortfall?

A: The numbers are so staggering that sometimes they lose their context, don't they? Let me put it in simple terms because I love one of the things about Gen. Schoomaker is he puts it in terms even I can understand. And I'm no wizard. The first thing he said was, "Come to me and tell me how much equipment we were short at the start of this war, 9/11." And so we just took, laid down our organization, and what we came up with was 56 billion dollars' worth of equipment that was just flat missing. And so we started this war with across active, Guard, and Reserve, 56 billion dollars' worth of missing equipment.

The next thing we had was a substantial problem in which we didn't have the modernization and the depth of capability. When we sent the 507th Maintenance driving north out of Kuwait and they blundered into the ambush they did, we found to our horror that this was a logistics unit that had no crew-served weapons, no night vision, none of the modern enablers for war. And we said, well they were never supposed to fight. You know, they were supporters. Now we realized the reality, which is everybody fights and everybody's at risk. So, we had to then flesh out the essentially the redesign of the force to give us what we all ought to have invested in all along. The reality of the conflict was not just a frontal engagement.

Today's fight is through the depths of the battlefield. So what we've done is, frankly gotten enormous support, the supplemental funding that we've received, as starting in FY06 and 05, has done a lot to try to redress the both the balance in terms of modernization and capability and filling holes. So at this point we're making substantial progress in filling in the holes and in addressing the modernization deltas. My estimate is, we've been able to eat about half of those holes away, and also apply substantial improvements in the modernization level of what we have. The existing plan that we have that we'll submit to Congress here this next week continues that campaign. And essentially what you see then is if we realize our goal of the current planning for supp., and the current plan that's in the base POM, we would have a healthy Army that has the right kind of capability by about FY13.

Q: Will we have wiped out the \$56 billion?

A: It won't have wiped it out, but we will have largely attritted it. If you liken this thing to a moving vehicle that you're painting as you're doing it, it's changing as it's moving, you'll never get it all painted. But we're making a heck of an effort based upon the

support we've gotten from Congress and the American public, and we've already done a substantial amount to eat the worst of those holes out. As I mentioned, though, we still have problems. The formations that are back here in the States that are active, Guard, and Reserve, don't have the equipment that they ought to have, and that's an element of risk that all of us are buying into right now, and we have to erase that, and we will.

Q: How many are representative of the troops in the growth plan account for the reductions in the FCS equipment types--you're going for 18 or 19?

A: Well, if you're talking about how we're realigning the brigade combat teams, the focus in FCS is, that what you get essentially is more trigger pullers because you have less supporters. And the estimate right now is that a brigade combat team, you get somewhere around 400 more trigger pullers because of the lack of need for all of the logistics that's in today's very cumbersome, very heavy, and very inefficient outfits.

Q: How many within the growth plan, the 65,000 that the Army is (inaudible), accounts for these reductions in FCS?

A: The two are not related in time. In other words, the growth right now of the Army is a near-term thing that will be achieved by FY13. The first FCS brigade is not scheduled to come online to start activation until FY15.

Q: Question about 2/3 of the Army that's being rated "unready to deploy." Is that still accurate; has that changed one way or the other?

A: The specific wording of the report I don't remember, but here's the basic nature of our problem. If you take a look at the forces that are not deployed to combat, whether they're active, Guard, or Reserve, they have substantial equipping shortfalls, and also some issues with training and manning. What that means then is, they're not optimized to be ready to fight a high-intensity conflict. The standard readiness system we have measures you against the full spectrum of requirement that you're supposed to have, so by that standard, they're not ready. They have substantial equipping holes; they are not trained to the level they should be at, and so therefore they're unready for high-intensity conflict. We have been very successful in focusing both equipping and training and manning on the units that are going to combat, but those units have been focused on low-intensity conflict--their training program has been almost exclusively focused to that end. And even they are not high-intensity conflict certified.

Q: So, essentially what you're saying is that, except for those ones that are say, a month out from deployment, all of them are unready?

A: Yes, for high-intensity conflict, because we're not focusing right now on producing

units for high-intensity conflict. We simply don't have that capability. Now, what we've testified then is that what America needs to do is realize that we can fulfill the national strategy, but we'll do that, it'll take more time, and it'll also take us increased casualties to do the job.

Q: Can you elaborate on that?

A: Well, frankly, I can't elaborate much more than that. We have an issue, and that's part of what I think the recent decisions by the President and the Secretary of Defense have addressed. We're going to build a more robust Army. We're going to continue to invest in a ground force that has the right capabilities, the right equipment, the right training, to do its job. We've made enormous improvements in the quality of our Army over the last four years. This is a voyage in progress--it's being measured against the harsh (inaudible) test of combat, which has forced some grim realities on all of us.

Q: The question, General, is whether the readiness rating systems, and there are many of them, remain biased towards high-intensity combat as the "real war," and the stuff you've been doing for the last five years is just air. If everybody were ready for their major (inaudible) operations, they would, I assume, (inaudible) time, 24 hours a day, they would be less ready for the war that we in fact have been fighting. Is the Army's readiness a metric capture of what you have just defined for us as being the need for this new century to be ready for both ends?

A: I think it does, and I think American citizens ought to respect us to have a readiness system that measures against the high end and the low end, which is what it does right now. That's vitally important. Let's talk for example the ability to replace artillery. Artillery is a part of high-intensity conflict that is very divorced from the isolated rounds that we're expending in Iraq today, which essentially are single-round precision target kind of engagements. If we're going to take on some kind of a combat scenario in which you're facing a masked enemy, you'd better be damned good at employing volumes of artillery. That is a very sophisticated skill. Guess what our artillerymen are doing right now. They're driving trucks. Well, now that's a choice we had to make, and it's the right choice for this fight. But don't kid yourself. Those truckers ought to also be artillerymen and artillery is a very sophisticated issue. When you're moving under artillery, and you're watching, you're feeling those rounds going overhead, you want confidence that guy wasn't driving a truck yesterday. (Laughter.)

That's the issue. You want us to measure ourselves against the most demanding test. You want us to be honest. And you want to hear our complaints because at least then you can assess for yourselves the relative risk you're willing to absorb. What you don't want is a compliant military that in some way responds to subtle pressures and doesn't tell you the truth.

Q: The artillery battery commander winds up de facto being the civil affairs officer in a village. You probably want to be sure that he wasn't cannon-cocking up until last week. ("Exactly.") He's also expert at civil affairs.

A: And you see, that's the great thing about this (inaudible) process, without belaboring you with a lecture. Essentially you got three cylinders: reset, train, the guys who are next, and the guys who are in combat. The goal now is that we identify early on what are you going to be doing? If you're an artillery outfit and you're going to be civil affairs, we're trying to tell you early in reset train, that's what you're going to be doing, and you have a designated mission for that. You will deploy to do that; now train for that. So throw away your damn cannons, get to work on learning a language, you know, etcetera, etcetera, and then let's get focused on that. And that's the risk we're (inaudible). You will rate yourself's artillery unit unready for artillery. We understand that, and then we rate you as, are you tailored and ready to execute your mission in this scenario, which is a civil affairs outfit? We say yes. That's the disparity then you'll see. You'll see red for readiness to execute high-intensity conflict, and then you'll see high ratings (inaudible), but I can do this what I'm being asked to do in this current combat scenario.

Q: With the 12-month mobilization for National Guard and 7 to 10 months in boots on the ground, how much of, is all the training going to be 39 days before the National Guard units go over, and if so, how are you going to make those 39 days count for the six months they get now?

A: We don't have the answer, at least, I don't have your answer. I know that right now Forces Command spent this last weekend working the issue of a specific training plan to address pre-mode and post-mode training. That's why we're giving you an estimate right now. We're saying you're going to get somewhere between 7 and 10 months boots on the ground, and I think the reason for that is, we don't know the specific concept that we can do for pre-mode training. And then based upon the kind of unit you are and the kind of collective training capability we want, we may need more or less post-mode training.

Q: (Inaudible) something that could include pre-mode training as part of 12 months deployment?

A: Yes, some of your post-mode training could be very important training, and that's why we're not saying we're mobilizing you and sending you right to combat. We're saying that you will only get between seven and 10 months boots on the ground because we will have to spend some of your post-mode time training you before we deploy you? How much of that we don't know.

Q: Could you address how to hand over equipment sets to Iraqi forces (inaudible)?

A: My job is the industrial part of this business. My goal is that while we support the use of all kinds of equipment; Army equipment, American equipment, and other national equipment to build Iraqi capability and Afghani capability, it better not be at the expense of the American soldier or Marine. So what that means is that we're evaluating any request as a context of total industrial capability. Example: if we can produce about 1,000 up-armored humvees, and if I've got a requirement, we'll say on a monthly basis for about 500. And the Marines are getting about 400, what that means then is you've got about another 150 or so that we could play with. It's a total industrial capability that exists. Can we meet other requirements within that, whatever the remaining delta is? And so we are doing this in a collaborative process. It's a part of the joint process that we participate in, and I think it's been quite successful at meeting the requirements out of both Afghanistan and Iraq.

END TEXT