



Executive Summary

Strategic Studies Institute and U.S. Army War College Press



INVESTIGATING THE BENEFITS AND DRAWBACKS OF REALIGNING THE NATIONAL GUARD UNDER THE DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Ryan Burke
Sue McNeil

The 2014 *Quadrennial Defense Review* (QDR) designates homeland defense as one of the three core pillars of the nation's current and future defense strategy.¹ Defending the homeland from external threats and aggression requires a robust military capability. In this sense, both the federal Armed Forces (active and reserve components), as well as state National Guard forces play important roles in the defense of the nation. Further, homeland defense often overlaps with civil support and homeland security to form a triad of domestic military operational domains. Where the roles, responsibilities, and limitations of the active and reserve components of the Armed Forces are relatively clear in this triad, the National Guard is a unique military entity capable of serving in either a state-controlled or federally controlled status during domestic operations. Whether the National Guard operates in a state-funded, state-controlled status (State Active Duty [SAD]); a federally funded, state-controlled status (Title 32); or a federally funded and controlled status (Title 10) is a topic of ongoing debate during civil support missions. Regardless of their duty status in such situations, the National Guard contributes to the security, protection, and well-being of the population. As such, it is important to continually assess the roles, responsibilities, and organizational orientation of the National Guard during domestic operations in support of civil authorities, and to ensure the states and federal government maximize the utility of this unique military capability when it matters most.

As part of the ongoing effort to improve domestic mission capabilities in support of civil authorities, the Department of Defense (DoD) continually evaluates new and different approaches to achieving enhanced civil-military coordination. In this context, the unique position of the National Guard as either a state or fed-

eral military force—depending on duty status designation—brings added complexity to the already difficult task of ensuring a well-coordinated state and federal military response effort. As such, there has been continued debate over whether the National Guard—or specific elements thereof—should serve in a permanent federal capacity to better support the nation's security and disaster response mission. As a result of that ongoing discussion, the 2014-2015 Army War College's Key Strategic Issues List (KSIL) asks: "what would be the benefits and drawbacks of realigning the [National] Guard under the [Department] of Homeland Security to enhance domestic security and disaster response, while retaining utility for overseas missions in support of the Department of Defense?"²

This monograph details our efforts to research and evaluate the perceived benefits and drawbacks of realigning the National Guard under the DHS, as per the KSIL topic noted above. We begin with a brief review of the relevant literature shaping the current policy and doctrinal approach to military civil support operations, including a summary of laws and strategic guidance relevant to the discussion. We then note the important distinctions between homeland security (HS) and homeland defense (HD), and the military role in each context. The seam between HS and HD provides a conceptual basis for discussing the roles and responsibilities of the National Guard, the DHS, and the DoD within domestic security and disaster response operations. After evaluating the National Guard's role in each of the above contexts, we briefly discuss the realignment of the United States Coast Guard (USCG) within the DHS as a proxy for comparison of a similar realignment of a military-style entity under the DHS. Then, drawing from interviews with relevant subject matter experts, we present sev-

eral potential benefits and drawbacks of a National Guard realignment to the DHS as noted by those interviewed for this monograph. Interview subjects represented a broad range of backgrounds, including officers from both the Army and Air National Guard; the Maryland and Delaware state emergency management agencies; active and retired USCG officers; the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA); U.S. Northern Command (NORTHCOM); current and former senior DoD officials with experience in homeland defense and civil support operations; as well as representatives from academia with specific interests in military-involved state and federal operations. The study concludes with five short recommendations in summary of the research effort.

ENDNOTES

1. Chuck Hagel, *2014 Quadrennial Defense Review*, Washington, DC: Department of Defense, March 4, 2014, p. V.

2. Headquarters, Department of the Army, *Part I: Army Priorities for Strategic Analysis*, 2014-2015 Key Strategic Issues List, Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute and U.S. Army War College Press, June 2014, p. 10.

More information about the programs of the Strategic Studies Institute (SSI) and U.S. Army War College (USAWC) Press may be found on the Institute's homepage at www.StrategicStudiesInstitute.army.mil.

Organizations interested in reprinting this or other SSI and USAWC Press executive summaries should contact the Editor for Production via e-mail at SSI_Publishing@conus.army.mil. All organizations granted this right must include the following statement: "Reprinted with permission of the Strategic Studies Institute and U.S. Army War College Press, U.S. Army War College."



This Publication



SSI Website



USAWC Website