



THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
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WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1000

JAN 19 2007

MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS
CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF
UNDER SECRETARIES OF DEFENSE

SUBJECT: Utilization of the Total Force

For several months, the Department has been assessing a number of options on how best to support global military operational needs. A significant question addressed by the review has been whether we have the right policies to govern how we utilize members of the Reserve, National Guard and our Active Components units. Based on this assessment and the recommendations of our military and civilian leadership, I am making the following changes to Department policy:

First, from this point forward, involuntary mobilization for members of the Reserve Forces will be for a maximum one year at any one time. At service discretion, this period may exclude individual skill training required for deployment, and post-mobilization leave.

Second, mobilization of ground combat, combat support and combat services support will be managed on a unit basis. This will allow greater cohesion and predictability in how these Reserve units train and deploy. Exceptions will require my approval.

Third, the planning objective for involuntary mobilization of Guard/Reserve units will remain a one year mobilized to five years demobilized ratio. However, today's global demands will require a number of selected Guard/Reserve units to be remobilized sooner than this standard. Our intention is that such exceptions be temporary and that we move to the broad application of the 1:5 goal as soon as possible. Continue to plan your force structure on that basis.

The planning objective for the Active Force remains one year deployed to two years at home station. Today, most active units are deploying for one year, returning home for one year, then redeploying. Just as we are asking the active forces to do more in this time of national need, so we must ask more of our Reserve components.

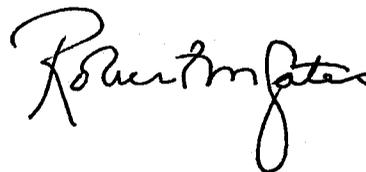


Fourth, given this reality, I am directing the establishment of a new program to compensate or incentivize individuals in both the active and Reserve components who are required to mobilize or deploy early or often, or to extend beyond the established rotation policy goals.

Fifth, I am also directing that all commands and units review how they administer the hardship waiver program to ensure they are properly taking into account exceptional circumstances facing military families of deployed service members.

Sixth, use of Stop Loss will be minimized for both active and Reserve component forces. Submit to me by February 28, 2007, your plan for minimizing use of Stop Loss.

The Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness will update existing guidance on Reserve mobilization to reflect these principles.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert M. Gates". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial "R".