

CBO PAPERS

**AN ANALYSIS
OF ALTERNATIVE ARMY FORCES
PROPOSED BY THE NATIONAL GUARD
ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES**

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**CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE
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NOTES:

Unless otherwise indicated, all years referred to in this report are fiscal years.

Details in the text and tables may not add to totals because of rounding.

Unless otherwise indicated, all costs are expressed in billions of fiscal year 1993 dollars of budget authority.

This year the National Guard Association of the United States (NGAUS) submitted a proposal to the Congress and the Administration that would shift more of the Army's forces into units manned by the Army National Guard. The merits of this proposal may be considered as the Congress debates the appropriate size and composition of Army forces. The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) analyzed the NGAUS proposal at the request of the ranking minority member of the House Committee on Armed Services and the ranking minority member of the Subcommittee on Military Personnel and Compensation of the House Committee on Armed Services. In keeping with CBO's charter to provide objective and nonpartisan analyses, the paper makes no recommendations.

Lane Pierrot performed the analysis, under the general supervision of Robert F. Hale and Neil M. Singer. William P. Myers estimated the cost and manpower implications of the proposal. Karen Watkins and Martin Felsenthal assisted in the latter stages of the analysis. Paul Houts edited the manuscript. Cynthia Cleveland prepared it for release.

SUMMARY

Recently, the National Guard Association of the United States (NGAUS) made a proposal that would alter the Administration's suggested forces for the U.S. Army. The NGAUS proposal would shift more of the Army's forces into units manned by personnel of the Army National Guard. A key element of the NGAUS proposal would retain four more divisions in the Army National Guard than the Administration proposes to keep, while also eliminating four other divisions, including two divisions on active duty and the two new cadre divisions that the Army plans to create.

Once all forces are fully mobilized and trained, the NGAUS proposal would provide at least as much warfighting capability as the Administration's proposed force. However, divisions in the Army National Guard, whose members train only part time in peacetime, would require more time than active-duty divisions to mobilize and train for war. Thus, under the NGAUS proposal, more units would be available for reinforcing active divisions but fewer for immediate deployment. That means giving up some insurance against the need to deploy divisions relatively early during a conflict in order to reinforce active forces.

As for costs, the NGAUS proposal--once all its provisions are fully in effect--could result in a reduction in the defense budget of about \$1.1 billion a year compared with the costs under the Administration's plan. Savings might be larger or smaller depending on how the Army carried out the changes proposed by NGAUS. One important issue involves the nature of the two active divisions that would be eliminated, which NGAUS did not specify. The estimate of \$1.1 billion in savings assumes that these two divisions would include one armored or "heavy" division based in Europe and one heavy division based in the Continental United States. (Divisions are termed heavy when they contain large numbers of tanks and other heavy equipment; light when they contain less heavy equipment.) Savings would amount to \$1.7 billion if both active divisions were based in Europe because these units are manned with more active-duty personnel than stateside divisions. Savings would be about \$0.8 billion if both divisions were light divisions. Finally, savings could be lower still--indeed, they might evaporate entirely--under other assumptions about how the NGAUS proposal is implemented.

That approach to carrying out the NGAUS proposal could affect not only costs but also warfighting capability. For example, if the active divisions to be eliminated under the NGAUS proposal are light divisions, the total Army force would contain a larger proportion of heavy units. In some conflicts, more heavy divisions would provide additional warfighting capability.

The analysis of the NGAUS proposal in this paper uses information from briefings provided by NGAUS and the Army as well as information from a costing model maintained by the Congressional Budget Office (CBO).

FORCE STRUCTURE UNDER THE NGAUS PROPOSAL

The NGAUS proposal only affects Army forces.¹ It would retain the 20 divisions that the Administration plans to maintain in the Army. (A division typically consists of 10,000 to 17,000 personnel plus associated equipment and support personnel.) However, more of those divisions would be in the forces of the Army National Guard, which are manned only part time during peacetime.

By 1997, the Administration's proposed forces--which it terms the "base force"--would consist of 12 divisions in the active Army, six divisions in the Army National Guard, and two cadre divisions also in the Guard (see Table 1). (Cadre divisions, which are a new concept for the U.S. Army, would be lightly manned in peacetime and would be filled out with their full number of personnel only in time of war.) The NGAUS proposal would maintain 10 divisions in the Guard, the same number as in 1991, but four more than the Administration proposes for its base force. To avoid increasing the total number of divisions above the base-force level, NGAUS would reduce the number of active-duty divisions by two (10 instead of 12) and would eliminate the two cadre divisions.

The NGAUS proposal does not specify which two active divisions it would eliminate from the Administration's base force, but the nature of those divisions would affect costs and manning. In its basic estimate, this paper assumes that one of the divisions eliminated from active duty would be a heavy division that, under the Administration's base force, would be stationed in Europe at least through 1997. The other division is assumed to be one of the three heavy divisions that, under the base force, would be stationed in the Continental United States and used to reinforce earlier deploying active units. These heavy divisions have two active brigades and one brigade that is manned by Guard personnel.

The nature of the NGAUS proposal also depends on Army plans for manning its cadre divisions. The Army has indicated that, under the base-force plan, the cadre divisions would be manned with Guard personnel. But

1. National Guard Association of the United States and Adjutants General Association of the United States, "An Alternative Force Structure Proposal" (February 1992).

TABLE 1. ARMY FORCES IN 1997

Type of Unit	Administration's Base Force	NGAUS Proposal ^a
Active Divisions		
Heavy		
Forward deployed	3	2
Continental United States	5	4
Light		
Forward deployed	1	1
Continental United States	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>
Subtotal	12	10
Guard Divisions		
Fully manned	6	10
Cadre	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>
Subtotal	8	10
Guard Brigades		
Round-out	4	3 ^b
Round-up	2	3
Other (includes Armored Cavalry Regiments)	<u>5</u>	<u>9</u>
Subtotal	11	15

SOURCE: Congressional Budget Office estimates from Department of Defense and National Guard Association of the United States data.

NOTE: NGAUS = National Guard Association of the United States.

- a. The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) assumed that two heavy divisions would be eliminated, one from forward-deployed forces in Europe and the other from forces based in the Continental United States (CONUS).
- b. CBO's assumption that the CONUS-based division eliminated from the Active Army would be a division with a Guard round-out brigade makes that brigade a round-up brigade.
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the Army has not specified how many. This paper assumes that the cadre divisions proposed by the Administration are manned at a level equal to about 25 percent of the full manning of a typical mechanized division in the Guard. Thus, the NGAUS proposal would require adding enough Guard personnel to achieve full manning of these two divisions.

The NGAUS proposal would also apparently maintain more brigade-sized units in the Guard than would that of the Administration. (A brigade is typically about one-third the size of a full division.) The Administration's base force retains five brigade-sized units in the Guard that are not directly affiliated with active-duty units (five separate brigades and one armored cavalry regiment). Although the details are not clear, the NGAUS proposal probably would retain a total of nine of these units in the Guard, restoring four brigades that the Administration plans to eliminate.

The Army also maintains some brigades in the Guard that are directly affiliated with units. Although the NGAUS proposal would not alter the total number of these "round-out" and "round-up" brigades, it could alter the mix of units in these categories. A round-out brigade is kept at a higher state of readiness for war and trains with an affiliated active division that, in peacetime, has only two of its three brigades on active duty. In time of war, the round-out brigade would be called to active duty and would be deployed with the division as its third brigade. Both the NGAUS proposal and the Administration's base force retain all Guard brigades currently designated as round-out units, even though some of the active divisions that they would round out are to be eliminated under the base-force plan. Some of these former round-out brigades would be redesignated as round-up brigades. Round-up brigades in the Guard will be associated with an active division that has three active-duty brigades in peacetime. In time of war, Guard round-up brigades would be called to active duty to provide a fourth brigade.

The NGAUS proposal could lead to an increase in round-up brigades and an equal reduction in round-out brigades. This paper assumes that, in carrying out the NGAUS proposal, the Army would eliminate an active-duty division based in the Continental United States that has two active brigades. Each such division has a round-out brigade in the Guard. The Guard round-out brigade associated with that active division is assumed to become a round-up brigade.

MANPOWER UNDER THE NGAUS PROPOSAL

CBO estimates that about 440,000 Guard personnel would be needed to support the forces in the NGAUS proposal. This level would represent about

102,000 more Guard personnel than the number associated with the Administration's base force. This substantial increase in Guard personnel is required under the NGAUS proposal to man the two Guard divisions that are retained, to provide personnel for the two cadre divisions that are upgraded from 25 percent manning to full manning, and to man the extra brigades that are retained. The cost analysis in this paper assumes Guard manning of 440,000. (CBO's estimate is based on historical factors for units and so assumes manning levels for Guard units that are modestly higher than today's levels.)

NGAUS estimated that in 1997, when all its proposed changes are in place, the forces in its proposal could be manned with about 420,000 Guard personnel.² That number would represent about 82,000 more Guard personnel than the Administration plans to have in 1997. However, it is also about 11,000 fewer personnel than the planned 1992 level, even though the force structure proposed by NGAUS is similar to the 1992 structure.

If the Guard were only manned with 420,000 people, then savings would be larger than those estimated in this paper, but there could also be adverse effects on capability. The NGAUS estimate of 420,000 may reflect the assumption that fewer personnel would be needed to provide support to the active units that are eliminated under the NGAUS proposal. However, a NGAUS force manned with 420,000 Guard personnel could also leave some Guard units undermanned. At the time of mobilization, these units would either have reduced capability or would have to wait until additional personnel could be assigned to them.

Fewer active personnel would be required under the NGAUS proposal. NGAUS, however, did not estimate how many fewer. The estimates in this paper assume that active manpower would be reduced below the planned level in the Administration's base force by amounts consistent with the size of the two active divisions to be eliminated, minus the additional active military personnel who would be needed to provide support for the Guard units that are to be retained. The elimination of two heavy divisions, one from Europe and one from the Continental United States, would result in a reduction in active end strength of about 50,000 people. But about 14,000 additional active-duty personnel would be needed to support the Guard units that are retained under the NGAUS proposal. Thus, active Army end

2. NGAUS estimated that a Force Structure Allowance (FSA) of 420,000 personnel would be required. FSA is a term used by the Army to designate authorized strength rather than actual end strength or manning levels, which can be higher or lower. In the remainder of this discussion, however, it is assumed that FSA is equivalent to end strength.

strength under the proposal would total about 500,000, or about 36,000 fewer active personnel than are associated with the Administration's base force.

These results suggest that the NGAUS proposal would increase the share of total Army manpower made up of reserves (including both Army National Guard and Army Reserve personnel). Given CBO estimates of the impact on manpower of the NGAUS proposal, the share would rise from 51 percent in the Administration's plan for 1997 to about 57 percent (see Table 2).

COSTS AND SAVINGS

CBO estimates that, once all the recommended changes are in place, the NGAUS proposal could result in annual net savings of about \$1.1 billion compared with costs under the Administration's base force (see Table 3). (All of CBO's estimates are stated in constant 1993 dollars of budget authority.) The savings reflect net reductions in the costs to operate and support units. These net savings take into account the added costs of increasing the number of Guard units above the base-force level as well as the savings associated with maintaining fewer active units.

In arriving at these estimates, CBO made a number of specific assumptions about the operating costs associated with units affected by the NGAUS proposal. The two Guard divisions retained under the NGAUS proposal are assumed to be manned and to incur costs at levels typical of mechanized divisions now in the Guard. Also, the four separate brigade-sized units that are retained under the NGAUS proposal are assumed to cost as much to operate as an average brigade in a Guard mechanized division.

CBO's estimates of savings reflect changes in three categories of the costs required to operate and support military units: direct, indirect, and overhead. Some portions of operating and support costs, such as the pay for personnel in military units and the cost of fuel used in unit training, can be related directly to individual military units. These direct costs can be estimated from the major building blocks of the Department of Defense (DoD) budget, which DoD terms the primary program elements. Other portions of operating and support costs--for example, parts of the medical and training establishment--can be related to military units, though only indirectly using modeling techniques. The remainder of operating and support costs tend not to respond to small changes in the number of units. These activities, which CBO terms overhead, include much of the training and medical establishment, as well as many administrative services and many of the activities that provide central supply and maintenance services.

TABLE 2. ARMY END STRENGTH IN BASE FORCE
AND NGAUS PROPOSAL (In thousands of people)

Component	1992	Administration's Base Force	NGAUS Proposal	CBO's Estimate ^a
Active	641	536.0	n.a.	500
Reserve	302	229.4	n.a.	230
Guard	<u>431</u>	<u>338.0</u>	<u>420^b</u>	<u>440</u>
Total	1,374	1,103.4	n.a.	1,170
Share of Reserves (percent)	53.4	51.4	n.a.	57.3

SOURCE: Congressional Budget Office estimates from Department of Defense and National Guard Association of the United States data.

NOTES: NGAUS = National Guard Association of the United States; n.a. = not applicable.

a. Rounded to the nearest 10,000 people.

b. Force Structure Allowance.

TABLE 3. SAVINGS AND COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE NATIONAL GUARD ASSOCIATION PROPOSAL
(In billions of 1993 dollars of budget authority)

	Direct and Indirect ^a	Overhead ^b	Total Savings
Savings			
Active Army Reductions			
Eliminate one heavy division stationed in Europe and one stationed in CONUS	2.5	1.4	3.8
Costs			
Guard Additions			
Add two Guard mechanized divisions	-0.7	-0.4	-1.1
Bring cadres to full strength ^c	-0.5	-0.3	-0.9
Add four brigade-sized units ^d	<u>-0.5</u>	<u>-0.3</u>	<u>-0.8</u>
Total Costs	-1.7	-1.0	-2.8
Net Savings			
Total Net Savings	0.7	0.3	1.1

SOURCE: Congressional Budget Office estimates from historical Department of Defense budget data.

NOTES: Minus signs in table indicate costs. Numbers may not add to totals because of rounding. CONUS = Continental United States.

- a. Direct operating and support costs are those that are tied closely to individual units and come from the primary program elements of the budget such as divisions, brigades, or tactical support. Examples of direct costs include civilian and military pay, fuel, some supplies and spare parts, modifications, and munitions. CBO divided the mission and central support program elements of the budget into two parts—a variable portion that CBO calls indirect and a fixed part that CBO calls overhead. CBO found that about 50 percent of the support elements of the budget vary with small changes in force structure. Support program elements of the budget pay for items that are necessary to support units, but are not linked as closely to particular units. Examples include funds for operating bases, depot maintenance, training, management support, medical care, personnel support, logistics, and other centralized support functions.
- b. Overhead represents a proportional reduction in what CBO calls the fixed portion of the mission and central support program elements of the budget. CBO assumes that these costs would not change with small changes in the number of active and reserve forces.
- c. The proposal would add back enough people and money to restore these units to their original levels. The estimate assumes that the Army National Guard (ARNG) cadre divisions will be funded and staffed at 25 percent of an ARNG mechanized division. These assumptions were necessary because the Army has not indicated the manning levels or costs for these units.
- d. CBO costed these brigades as an average brigade in an ARNG mechanized division.

The estimated savings of \$1.1 billion assume that overhead costs vary proportionally with changes in direct and indirect expenses. That may be a reasonable assumption because the NGAUS proposal would make changes in forces in addition to many other changes occurring. To the extent that overhead costs do not vary proportionally, however, savings would be smaller. If, for example, overhead costs do not change at all under the NGAUS proposal, then annual savings would be smaller--about \$0.7 billion rather than \$1.1 billion (see Table 3).

Effects of Alternative Assumptions

CBO's estimates of savings depend critically on a number of factors. Most important is what types of active divisions the Army eliminates. The NGAUS proposal did not provide estimates of annual savings associated with eliminating active units; nor did it specify which active divisions would be eliminated. CBO's estimates assume that the active divisions to be eliminated under the NGAUS proposal would include one heavy division based in Europe and one based in the Continental United States. If, instead, both divisions that are eliminated are heavy ones based in Europe, then savings would be larger by about \$0.6 billion than the estimate of \$1.1 billion shown in Table 3. The larger savings are based on a reduction of about 60,000 active-duty military personnel drawn from the two active divisions in Europe. That reduction would still leave a substantial number of Army personnel on active duty in Europe.

The Army could also choose to eliminate active divisions that are less costly to operate than heavy divisions. For example, the Army could eliminate two light divisions from active duty, thus opting to maintain a large number of heavy divisions on active service for use in contingencies. In that case, net savings under the NGAUS proposal would total about \$0.2 billion less than the estimate of \$1.1 billion.

Net savings would also be lower if the cadre divisions under the Administration's proposal are manned at lower strength than CBO assumed in its basic cost estimate. The Army has not provided detailed plans for manning the cadre divisions. CBO assumes that, under the Administration's plan, they are manned with Guard personnel at 25 percent of normal strength. If, instead, the cadre divisions are manned at only 5 percent of normal strength, then the NGAUS proposal--which restores full manning for these two divisions--would save about \$0.2 billion less than the estimate of \$1.1 billion.

Finally, savings could be lower depending on the costs to operate the four extra brigade-sized units that are maintained under the NGAUS proposal. NGAUS did not provide details about the manning of these brigades. CBO's basic estimate assumes that the units each cost the same to operate as a typical brigade in a Guard mechanized division. But the separate brigades the Guard currently maintains cost more to operate than brigades that are part of divisions. If the four units are maintained and operated like these separate brigades, net savings would be about \$0.7 billion less than the estimate of \$1.1 billion.

These alternative assumptions could negate all of the net savings associated with the NGAUS proposal. Under the alternative assumptions taken together, the NGAUS proposal could actually add about \$0.1 billion to the cost of the Administration's proposal. However, as is noted below, the alternative assumptions could also lead to a force that, in some circumstances, would have greater military capability than the Administration's base force.

Effects That Cannot Be Readily Quantified

The estimates of savings in this paper could also be altered by changes in assumptions whose effects cannot be readily quantified. The estimates of costs and capability assume that the additional Guard units retained under the NGAUS proposal are manned and operated at levels consistent with those in today's Guard units. The NGAUS proposal suggests, however, that Guard units could be deployed for war earlier "if they are resourced to adequate levels." This statement suggests that NGAUS may envision policy changes designed to improve the peacetime readiness of Guard units, perhaps including more peacetime training, better equipment, more use of full-time personnel to help with peacetime training, or any of a host of other changes that could be made. These changes would reduce the savings associated with the NGAUS proposal, but the changes would also improve the capability of Guard divisions.

Savings might also be reduced if recruiting costs were to increase. As the share of forces in the Army National Guard rises under the NGAUS proposal, recruiting problems could eventually occur. Historically, more than half of all Guard personnel serve on active duty before becoming Guard members, and fewer of these personnel with prior service will be available as the size of the active force declines. Significant recruiting problems do not seem likely in the immediate future. Large numbers of personnel would be leaving active duty, and enough of these individuals would probably join the Guard. If problems occur in the longer run, the Guard might have to increase the pay or benefits

for recruits with previous service, or it might have to rely more heavily on recruits who do not have previous experience on active duty.

Timing changes could also alter savings estimates. The estimates in this paper assume that all changes have been fully phased in. For example, if the Guard divisions were retained but the active divisions were not eliminated for some period, there could be substantial costs relative to the Administration's plan during that period. Savings in any particular year also depend on when during the year units are eliminated. Obviously, units eliminated late in the year contribute little or no savings during that year.

CHANGES IN CAPABILITY

Once all units have been fully mobilized and trained, the forces available under the NGAUS proposal should provide at least as much warfighting capability as those under the Administration's base force, since both proposals retain the same total number of divisions. Because the reduction in the number of active-duty units would probably make high-quality equipment available, the Guard units retained under the NGAUS proposal are likely to be well equipped. Thus, this discussion focuses on the number of units.

In some situations, the NGAUS proposal might provide substantially greater capability after full mobilization. NGAUS would retain a larger number of brigade-sized units. Moreover, Guard divisions are typically heavy units with substantial armored capability. If the two divisions that are eliminated from the active forces under the NGAUS proposal are light divisions, then after full mobilization the Army would have more armored capability.

How much advantage this extra capability confers would vary according to the nature of a future war. Most of the additional capability would be available only after full mobilization of reserve combat units. Full mobilization would certainly occur in a major conflict against a resurgent military power like the former Soviet Union, and the extra capability would surely be useful in that large a war. In the post-Cold War era, most military analysts view the emergence of such a threat as highly unlikely. The Administration argues, however, that the United States should prepare for two conflicts against capable regional adversaries. Confronted with two such conflicts, the United States might well mobilize its reserves. Thus, by Administration reckoning, the extra capability offered by the Guard units could provide a useful hedge.

Longer Time to Train

Although the forces proposed by NGAUS would eventually provide at least as much warfighting capability as the base forces, some of it would be available later. Guard units would require more time than active units to train for war. Estimates of the amount of extra time vary widely, however. NGAUS estimates that a full Guard division would require 60 to 90 days after mobilization to prepare for combat, in contrast to some active divisions that would be available for war with little or no additional training (see Table 4). The Army currently estimates that it would take about a year for a full Guard division to be ready to fight and about 90 days for a brigade. But the current Army estimate for divisions is much higher than the estimate the Army made in 1991, when the figure stood at six months, and higher still than the estimate of two to three months that the Army used in the 1970s and into the 1980s to assess the capability of U.S. forces in a war with the former Soviet Union. The NGAUS estimate is similar to the Army's estimate from the Cold War period.

The Persian Gulf War does not offer clear guidance on the amount of training time that Guard units would require. No Guard divisions were called to active duty during Operation Desert Storm, but three round-out brigades of the Army National Guard were mobilized in late November and early December. The brigades were to undergo training at their units, and then were to be sent for further training to the Army's National Training Center (NTC) at Fort Irwin, California. About three months later, at the end of the war, one of the three brigades (the 48th brigade from Georgia) had completed training at the National Training Center. The two other brigades (the 155th from Mississippi and the 256th from Louisiana) did not complete sufficient training to get to the NTC before ground combat began, and no round-out brigades were deployed to the Persian Gulf. After the war, reports by the Army Inspector General and the General Accounting Office (GAO) suggested that the Guard round-out brigades that were called up had substantial readiness and morale problems.

Despite these negative results, the Department of the Army, in a response to the GAO study, argued that its choice not to deploy the Guard brigades was unrelated to the state of their training.³ The Army also argued that the 48th Brigade did well at the National Training Center, defeating the U.S. forces assigned to play the role of "enemy" units at the center. These enemy forces are commonly credited with considerable combat capability. In

3. Department of the Army, Memorandum for the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs, "Comments on GAO Draft Report," August 27, 1991.

TABLE 4. ESTIMATES OF TRAINING TIME (In days)

	Army Estimate	NGAUS Estimate
Active Division	0	10 to 60 ^a
Guard Division	365	60 to 90 ^b
Cadre Division	365 or more	270 to 365 ^c

SOURCE: Congressional Budget Office estimates from Department of the Army and National Guard Association of the United States data.

NOTE: NGAUS = National Guard Association of the United States.

- a. Range depends on whether the division has round-out brigades.
 - b. Range depends on how rapidly units are needed.
 - c. Range depends on whether the cadre division is manned by active-duty or Guard personnel.
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addition, the Army noted that a number of reserve units were deployed to the Persian Gulf and apparently performed well. These included combat brigades from the Guard (specifically, two field artillery brigades), as well as a number of other smaller reserve units. Reserve proponents have also noted that the Marine Corps, which deployed a larger portion of its forces to the Gulf, did send a substantial number of reserve units. Thus, argue proponents, the Army's decision not to send the combat brigades may have been a function of need rather than readiness.

Because the United States has had no recent experience with cadre divisions, little information is available to compare the training time required by the cadre units with the time required by Guard divisions. However, Guard divisions would probably require less time to train for war than the planned cadre divisions. Indeed, the Army estimated in 1991 that cadre divisions would require up to 15 months to prepare for combat compared with its estimate of a year for Guard divisions.

Effects of Training Time on Reinforcement

Because of differences in training times, the NGAUS proposal would affect the time when units become available for combat. In planning for war, the Army divides units into categories according to their expected availability. The NGAUS proposal would move more units into the follow-on reinforcing category, which under Army estimates is expected to be available in about a year. Increases in follow-on reinforcing units would come at the expense of units that are expected to be deployed with little or no notice as well as from those that are expected to be deployed after more than a year.

Under the Army's system of categorization, some units are expected to be available for deployment to a theater of conflict with little or no notice. Forward-deployed forces fall into this category. Under the base force, there would be four forward-deployed divisions (two in Germany, one in Korea, and one in Hawaii) in addition to several forward-deployed brigades (see Table 5). Crisis response units are also supposed to be available for deployment almost immediately. The base force counts as crisis response units the five active divisions that are located in the Continental United States and that are assigned to the Army's contingency corps.

Units that would take longer to be available for deployment are characterized as either early reinforcing units (expected to be available in 60 days to 180 days) and follow-on reinforcements (available in 360 days). Table 5 shows the divisions and brigades that, under the base force, would fall into each of these categories.

The Army characterizes the two planned cadre divisions that would be created by the base force as reconstitution assets. It estimates that the cadre divisions would take up to 15 months to become available for deployment.

Under the Army's estimates of likely training time, the NGAUS proposal would increase by about two-thirds the number of divisions that fall into the follow-on reinforcing category--that is, units that the Army expects would be available in about one year.⁴ That increase would come at the expense of reconstitution assets, which would be eliminated. The NGAUS proposal would also decrease the number of forward-deployed units available by about one-eighth and the number of early reinforcing units by about one-sixth. Thus, the key change under the NGAUS proposal trades early deploying units for reinforcements that would be available for deployment later, perhaps as much as a year later.

4. For the purposes of this analysis, CBO assumed that a brigade is equal to one-third of a division.

TABLE 5. AVAILABILITY OF UNITS UNDER THE BASE FORCE AND NGAUS PROPOSAL, ASSUMING ARMY ESTIMATES OF TRAINING TIME

Type of Unit	Forward-Deployed	Crisis Response	Reinforcing		Reconstitution	Total
			Early	Follow-On		
Training Time (In days)						
Time for Units to Become Available	0	0	60-180	360	more than 360	n.a.
Administration's Base Force (Number of units)						
Active						
Divisions	4	5	3	0	0	12
Brigades	2	1	2	2	0	7 ^a
Guard						
Divisions	0	0	0	6	2	8
Brigades	2	0	6	3	0	11
NGAUS Proposal (Number of units)						
Active						
Divisions	3	5	2	0	0	10
Brigades	2	1	2	2	0	7 ^a
Guard						
Divisions	0	0	0	10	0	10
Brigades	3	0	6	6	0	15

SOURCE: Congressional Budget Office estimates from Department of the Army data.

NOTES: NGAUS = National Guard Association of the United States; n.a. = not applicable.

a. Excludes six brigade-sized units in the special forces that the Army does not typically include in its counts. Some units are not at full active strength.

The Importance of Longer Training Time

The Army's categorization of units provides a useful overview of the effects of the NGAUS proposal. But the key question is not so much when units would be available to be deployed as when those units would arrive in the combat zone and be ready to fight.

The answer to that question depends on many factors in addition to training time. The timing of a future conflict is one factor. For example, how much time would elapse between a confrontation that leads the President to call up reserves and the beginning of a shooting war? The less time that elapses, the greater the chance that any extra training time required by Guard units would be significant. How quickly Guard divisions are called to active duty is another factor. If the President delays calling up Guard units, perhaps because of a desire to avoid escalating the degree of the U.S. commitment, then Guard divisions would have less time to train before they are deployed. The availability of ships and other units to transport or "lift" equipment is yet another factor. The more lift resources that are available, the greater the chance that extra training time could delay the arrival of units into the combat area. The degree of needed training is also important. Military leaders will decide how much training is necessary in view of the role particular units are expected to play in a war. The more fully trained the units must be, the greater the importance of the extra training time that Guard units would require. Finally, the order of the deployment of Guard and active divisions is critical. If Guard divisions are deployed to a conflict relatively early, perhaps to avoid the need to redeploy those active units stationed overseas, then less time would be available for Guard units to complete needed training.

Under some circumstances, the extra training time required by the additional Guard divisions and retained under the NGAUS proposal could delay the arrival of those combat units during a future conflict. For most conflicts, the arrival of Guard units would surely be delayed if, as the Army now estimates, Guard divisions require a year to train. Such a delay could leave active Army units that are deployed with less reinforcement for a considerable period.

The arrival of Guard units could also be delayed even if they require less than a year to train fully. The Administration proposes to increase the lift capability of the U.S. military by buying additional transport ships and prepositioning some equipment overseas. The plan is to improve capability enough so that about five heavy divisions could be delivered to a combat area within 75 days. Under the NGAUS proposal, only 10 divisions would be on

active duty. Several of these active divisions might be deemed unavailable because they were deployed overseas or because their capabilities were not be suitable for a particular conflict. Thus, Guard divisions could be called for deployment to a conflict within a few months. To be available that quickly, those divisions would have to be called to active duty promptly and would have to complete their needed training in a few months. Since they could do that only under the most optimistic of assumptions, deploying a few divisions might have to be delayed to permit these units enough time to prepare.

It is not certain, however, that the NGAUS proposal would result in any delay. The Administration has not yet earmarked the funds necessary to improve lift resources; indeed, about \$6 billion in added funding must be identified during the 1994-1999 period, even though the overall defense budget is likely to decline sharply during that time. If lift resources are not increased, then experience during the Persian Gulf War is probably the best indicator of capability. During Operation Desert Storm, the United States transported about seven and one-half divisions to the Persian Gulf in five to six months. If most of the 10 active divisions available under the NGAUS proposal were transported to a conflict first, then Guard divisions might have between half a year and three-quarters of a year to train before being deployed, assuming they were called to active duty promptly. Even if lift capability is improved, Guard divisions might have nearly half a year to train if all the active divisions were deployed first. This amount of training time is within the range of the various estimates.

The delay associated with extra training time for Guard units would also depend on the capability of future adversaries and the role that Guard units would play. There is, of course, no magic moment when a unit is "trained." Rather, there is a continuum of capability from untrained to fully trained. If a wartime situation demanded, Guard units and some active units might be deployed after a substantial amount of training, but still short of being fully trained. If these units were thrust into the front lines in combat against a capable adversary, casualties would undoubtedly be higher than if the units were fully trained. Alternatively, if these units played a backup role in the war or if the war involved a foe with only modest capability, then deploying these units with less than full training might be acceptable.

CONCLUSION

In sum, compared with the Administration's base force, the NGAUS proposal gives up some insurance. In particular, substituting Guard divisions for two active divisions under the NGAUS proposal means that more units are available for a follow-on reinforcing role, but fewer for immediate

deployment. The NGAUS proposal therefore introduces a vulnerability to events that could require those two divisions to be deployed relatively early during a conflict. At the same time, the proposal could eventually result in a lower defense budget, perhaps by more than a billion dollars a year.