

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE  
**JOINT ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE**

February 22, 2001  
4:05 p.m.

**SENATE MEMBERS PRESENT**

Senator Gary Wilken, Co-Chair  
Senator Randy Phillips  
Senator Loren Leman  
Senator Drue Pearce  
Senator Bettye Davis

**HOUSE MEMBERS PRESENT**

Representative Eldon Mulder, Co-Chair  
Representative Lisa Murkowski  
Representative John Harris  
Representative Jeannette James

**PUBLIC MEMBERS PRESENT**

Jake Lestenkof (via teleconference)  
John Hoyt (via teleconference)  
George Vakalis (via teleconference)  
Dean Owen (via teleconference)  
Charles Wallace (via teleconference)

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Alan Walker  
Representative Reggie Joule

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Representative Joe Green  
Representative Richard Foster  
Representative Ken Lancaster  
Senator Gene Therriault

**COMMITTEE CALENDAR**

ALASKA'S SPACE MISSION AND MILITARY FORCE PROJECTION: ADJUTANT  
GENERAL PHIL OATES, DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS

**WITNESS REGISTER**

Adjutant General Phil Oates  
Department of Military &  
Veterans Affairs  
PO Box 5800  
Ft Richardson, AK 99505-0800

**ACTION NARRATIVE**

**TAPE 01-2, SIDE A**

Number 001

**CO-CHAIRMAN GARY WILKEN** called the Joint Armed Services Committee meeting to order at 4:05 p.m. Present were Senators Pearce, Leman, Davis and Co-Chair Wilken, and Representatives Murkowski, Harris, James and Co-Chair Mulder. Also present were Representatives Green, Foster and Lancaster. He announced that Adjutant General Phil Oates would update the committee on Alaska's Space Mission and National Missile Defense. He asked if there was anything to come before the committee at this time. Hearing nothing, CO-CHAIR WILKEN turned the meeting over to Adjutant General Oates.

ADJUTANT GENERAL PHIL OATES stated he would update the committee about new things on the horizon as well as ongoing issues. He pointed out the Alaska National Guard and the military in Alaska are part of the community. As part of its community support, it has made a major effort to help the World Winter Games of Special Olympics. He asked Mr. Ben Stevens to discuss the Special Olympics.

MR. BEN STEVENS acknowledged that Adjutant General Oates is one of the strongest supporters of the Special Olympics. This year, the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs will house 670 athletes on various military bases in Alaska. In addition, Adjutant General Oates has agreed to activate 375 Air Guard police to act as a security force. Beginning on Wednesday night 2,458 participants are confirmed to arrive from 74 nations. The event will be spectacular for both Anchorage and the state. He invited legislators to join the activities on March 4.

MR. STEVENS informed committee members that the \$500,000 Special Olympics request in the supplemental appropriations bill is the final piece of a \$16 million budget that the Special Olympics Committee has assembled from a multitude of funding sources: state, municipal, federal, and the corporate community. The \$500,000 will be used for the purpose of housing Team North America on the base, so the military will be reimbursed for housing. In event that the housing expense does not amount to \$500,000, the unused funds will revert back to the general fund. He thanked legislators for all of

the support they have provided since 1997, when they enacted the guarantee for the VIC committee.

CO-CHAIRMAN WILKEN asked how many people are arriving for the Special Olympics.

MR. STEVENS said 2,500 athletes and 200 officials and technical delegates are participating. He anticipates about 7,000 visitors to come through Anchorage at some point.

CO-CHAIRMAN WILKEN asked if the event will be broadcast around the world on television.

MR. STEVENS said the television broadcast package has been confirmed.

CO-CHAIRMAN WILKEN thanked Mr. Stevens for his work and announced the presence of Senators Phillips and Austerman.

ADJUTANT GENERAL OATES said the business he is in is about leadership and leadership is about people. His presentation today is about the people he represents who make his business work. His presentation is as follows.

I thought I'd start by telling you something that you already know but, sometimes, if you just look at it from a different perspective, it brings new meaning to it but it also brings relevance to the military pieces that I'll talk about. What I'm going to talk about here, the Alaska National Guard, is truly unique. We're no longer just an M-Day force - a mobilization day force. We're a part of the daily operational mission of the armed forces because our active duty forces have come down so much in strength. But also here in Alaska, we're also a part of bringing new mission relevance to all of the military in Alaska and that's the National Guard that's doing that, and they're also part of bringing new technology and new economic opportunities here.

I thought I'd start out by taking this globe and this little piece of string, and you see this piece of string - it's a little more than one-eighth of the way around the globe. Now many places think that they're the center of the globe. You might pick, say, Los Angeles. You know they think they're the center, or New York, or over in Berlin or Beijing. But you know, as the globe turns, if you're not near the top or the bottom of the globe, you're not really the center because those other places

all move. There's really a lot of significance in that when you're kind of stationary up there and you have the same perspective all of the time.

Now we'll kind of come back to the string idea. If you take the string up here, and you stretch it around - I'll just put in Juneau, Anchorage or Fairbanks - suddenly you are reaching just about 85 percent of the major developed areas in our world. Well, you could say you can do that from the South, too - have we got anybody from Australia here? You don't really have that economic infrastructure.

But you take the same string and you - see, well golly, that's a pretty good place for air routes because you can get to places from here over the top if you think the globe is round, quicker than you could do it from any other place if you talk about getting to places in the other direction as well. Look at fiber optic cable - why is this suddenly such an important hub to the world in the Pacific - that same string as it stretches around.

If you look at that string, if you put this string in Kodiak, and then you stretch it down, in fact you even double the string, look how far that you go with a launch capability. There's no other launch facility anywhere in the world that has that expanse of a missile range. Now if you take this string though, and you run it straight up over the top, where you can put something in orbit, you can put a lot more weight up there at a lot less cost. Plus, you've got the opportunity from that orbit, to look down at the top of the Northern Hemisphere. If you take that same string and put it from nations like Iran, or Iraq, or North Korea, and you say well if they have a missile, they're not going to shoot that missile so it goes under, they're going to shoot that missile so it goes over. And, so, where best to defend from that missile? Well, here's that same location.

So there are not politics in national missile defense; it's the physics of the problem. How can you be far enough forward so you can see them launch from space and from the ground, you can react to launch, you can launch and you can see how you did in that intercept and then you can watch again. But you can't do that anywhere else than Alaska and that's why Alaska is winning that debate.

Now if you look at this globe, let's use the string one other time. Where can you be forward stationed and

rearward stationed at the same time on our same nation's soil? Well you can only do that in Alaska. We talk about foreign deployed forces. That's been our doctrine ever since the end of the Korean War, to position our forces forward. But as our forces have come down we can't have them everywhere, and since we can't have them everywhere, they've started coming back to the United States and rapid deployment has become the norm du jour. And so where can you be rapidly deployable and on our same soil and rapidly deployable to all of these places? Well, Alaska, and that's one reason Alaska is growing in significance.

Now when you look at Alaska as well, what do you see happening in the Lower 48 and indeed the rest of the world? You see population growth, you see environmental restrictions, you see congested air corridors, you see congested sea corridors, you see people saying, not in my backyard with military training. That's not the case here in Alaska and it's not the case because of this group. It's because of our citizens and their support. Their long standing identification with the military - in fact our common history and heritage, but it's also because we've got the expanse and we don't have the environmental restrictions in our military training areas. We've got that expanse of - wide expansive air training corridors where you can fly an F-22 and you can do it supersonically. You can't do that in the Lower 48. Can you imagine F-22s supersonically out of, you know, the Washington, D.C. area. You'd probably get a few - if you were in the legislature there you'd probably be getting some phone calls. So Alaska is the place where you can train. You can train from the air, you can train on the ground, you can shoot live, you can train from the sea. That's going to grow and grow and grow in importance.

There for awhile, and I've been telling this story as you know, along with Senator Wilken, I've actually had the Sixth Division up there. How many times have you heard a similar - a variation of this story? It certainly goes back 10 years and maybe even more - trying to get people to listen and to understand, with what we just did with the string and the relevance of the training opportunities. It's getting pretty darn close to happening. People are recognizing the relevance of the military here and recognizing the relevance of this string and this globe.

So that kind of sets the stage for what I'm going to talk about. But I would say - I'm leaving tonight to go to Washington, D.C. to participate in a meeting of the Adjutant Generals Association of the United States. In part of that meeting, the Governor has asked myself and President Hamilton to go by and see Jim Evatt of Boeing. The reason for visiting Jim Evatt is he is the new head of the national missile defense effort for Boeing. He is the prime contractor. He's also the government representative and, by the way, he's also a retired military air force officer.

But the reason we're going to see Boeing is Boeing appears to be very, very happy to take their business to Alaska but doesn't seem to be engaged in doing their business from Alaska, similar to what they do in Huntsville or what they do in Seattle. And a lot of that is the same reason - they just don't understand the opportunities that are up here. And those opportunities begin, as this group knows so well, with our Native corporate structure that gives you business advantages. It begins with our fiber optic connectivity that allows you to export your ones and your zeroes in and out anywhere in the world. With our air cargo industry and a growing maintenance capacity for that cargo industry that is going up here and aircraft, and Boeing aircraft in the military and C-17s that they want to give to the National Guard and we want to take and - I'll come back to why those are so important. It's so important for our National Guard. To our launch facilities at Kodiak and Poker Flats - and we talked about that launch facility and its increased relevance for military testing and national missile defense activities - Northern Edge and other areas. To the University and its supercomputer capacity - its global logistics, its geophysical institute and the business that Boeing can do there - to our cold weather testing, to our military experimentation, our ranges, our training and use of weapons and procedures that Boeing is developing, our polar launch capacity.

And so, for all of those reasons we need to tell Boeing, you know, it's not good enough just to export your business into Alaska. You need to come to Alaska and be a part here. [Indisc.] will explore is a joint invitation from the Governor and this group to get the right people up here from Boeing and show them these opportunities.

Now let's talk about the Alaska National Guard because that's truly what I came here to talk about. We are, really, we're the old and we're the new. The genesis of our Alaska National Guard began in the World War II era. It has its lineage back to the Alaska Territorial Guard, the Eskimo Scouts, the Cold War days and, in fact, the mission was fairly constant through those Cold War days of being scouts out on the frontier and looking across at the Red Bear that was over there. And we were well suited for that mission. Our people that lived in those locations, our Native people, they were superb at that mission of living in the Arctic, being scouts in the Arctic and being the eyes and ears of our nation out here in the piece of real estate that was closest to the USSR. But then when the wall came down, that mission changed and we went almost eight years without having a work plan or a strategically relevant mission.

Now that is changing now and we are now in the world plan for critical site defense. This is important and I'll just take a couple of minutes to describe - the Army National Guard, why that's an important mission for us. As Representative Foster knows, critical site defense exercises the basic infantry skills. You've got to know the basics of shooting your weapon, of building defensive positions, of how to defend something, how to communicate, how to scout things, and how to protect that infrastructure. And that's important because we have 74 locations around the state and you have to do it basically on the individual level because we don't have the resources to pull everybody together for higher collective training. It's hard to be a transportation battalion when you don't have any roads. It's hard to be a [indisc.] defense battalion in these remote areas when you don't have the ability to come together and train routinely. So we want to hold on to that identity - to that scout identity. We want to grow this mission of critical site defense and we can export that. We can export that to Korea to defend an air field. We could do it here in Alaska to defend national missile defense sites if we need to do that. We could do it here to defend other sites. So it's a mission we can get our arms around and we can do.

But we also want to take some of that Army Guard structure and we want to do something else with it and we don't want to lose that scout presence in rural Alaska.

And to have this [indisc.] we call the group headquarters, we need three battalions of infantry or scouts, so how do we get those battalions and start transforming some of this structure that we've got - this Army Guard structure into something different. Well a great way is to partner with other states. Now we already do that with California and our support battalion and Army Guard structure. They have some of our companies for our support battalion structure. We already do that with Hawaii. Hawaii has a company of our aviation battalion. So taking that same concept - we go partly with other states, like Vermont and Maine, and maybe then transform one of our battalions into something that is brand new - a national missile defense battalion. We wouldn't want to do that if it put this other structure at jeopardy, but if we partner with these other states we can take some of this and do something else with it.

Now why is that important? You see, my mission, when we talk about national missile defense, is the mission of being a first provider and being responsible for the recruiting, the retention, the professional development, the quality of life, and taking care of the families and their training to allow them to do their job and to be professionally developed in the process. We are not the people that will fight the national missile defense system. That will be done through a structure that will go from the battalion on the ground here through the US Army Space Command through the US Space Command up to the national command authority and we'll have also the NORAD, and the Alaska NORAD region involved.

So that's not our mission. Our mission is the people mission. When you think of national missile defenses, you think about a small group of people to do that job. Any time that you have a small group of people that do a job and it's a very technical and specific job, and you do it in remote places like Fort Greeley and Shimyea, it's hard to continually maintain the manning bases to keep that mission going. You're pyramid is very flat. Not a lot of numbers. Not a lot of opportunity for professional development. So how do we start getting around that? How do we make this pyramid a little steeper?

Well, one idea, if the decision is made to fuel this, is to start with a foundation that we would call a traditional guard foundation. That's the weekend warrior that you may have heard of. It's the traditional guardsman, it's your neighbor. It's those people that you represent here in Juneau. They'd do this because it's a labor of love, they want to be a part of the military, they want to be a part of the service. By having that type of structure underneath it gives you depth that the full-timers can go for part-timers when the contractors hire them away because they're trained, and believe me that will happen. It also gives you the opportunity to take the part-timers to be the full-timers when you go one or two short. So that's the initial piece of the puzzle.

Number 1331

Now the next piece of the puzzle is you have to build a pyramid that includes other states. Now who are the other states we're talking with here? We're talking about Colorado, Cheyenne Mountain - the home of the brigade of the national missile defense system, we're talking about New Mexico where you do the basic air defense type of training that we use, you were talking about states like Alabama, the home of Huntsville and also our National Guard that's involved in their defense type training, we're talking about Florida that has similar skills, we're talking about North Dakota that is also in a race to have some type of role in national missile defense. So suddenly we're looking at a national guard that is just not centered on a state but it has some ability to rotate. Now this is sounding - especially - kind of like an active duty bunch of guys. You know, you kind of PCS around. But we know how to get there but if we don't build in that type of flexibility, we will forever more be recruiting, training, putting them in jobs and recruiting and training and putting them in jobs like they're going to be going out the back door. We've got to have the ability to rotate - you know, rotation in the state will be some of the pieces for NMD will be in Anchorage, the ultimate command post, the site activation command, our headquarters initially that will be building this. Some of the pieces will be at Fort Greeley, the missile field, the battalion headquarters, the families that live there. Some of the pieces will be at Clear, the upgraded early warning radar, space surveillance - that's the space surveillance radar for

that system. And you know, by the way, and I'll talk about, it will be National Guard manning as well - some of the people will be at Shimyea, on a rotation there. Some of the people will be in that traditional guard location, and where would that best be? Well, if you ask me right now, you know, we haven't got a firm plan, I think probably Fairbanks would be a good place. We've got a brand new armory there, we've got the University, we've got the ROTC element there, we've got a large enough community where we could have a traditional guard battalion. You've got to have some population or your not going to be able to recruit. So maybe Fairbanks, maybe some of those scouts there. We'll start transforming them and maybe we'll partner with one of those other states.

Then you've got to develop personnel rules for the National Guard so take this [indisc.] professional development and this rotation. We go off to send one of these great guards members to North Dakota and Colorado, and then when they want to come back, they can't get back in the door. That's not fair to them and ultimately that will fail too. So we've got to have some reemployment rights and we've got to have some flexibility with National Guard so even if we don't have a slot we still give them a job.

We've got to have personnel rules in place that recognize these are hardship assignments. The military for years and years has given extra incentives for the promotion or pay or benefits if you're in a hardship assignment. We need to do that for the National Guard. And suddenly you see the Alaska National Guard is becoming the champion of a new way of doing business. And this is also the same hook that's going to bring Boeing up here. This is a big deal. It's a big deal not only because of its military significance, it's a big deal because we're plowing new ground in the National Guard and what we do in this nation. It's also a big deal for what it does to education, ROTC, fiber connectivity, [indisc.] from AADC, technical opportunities, other economic opportunities. This is the hook. So if no other reason than that, it's an important thing.

Now I've given a lot of presentations on the national level debate on national missile defense. I won't go on to that here, today. But I am also firmly in favor of our nation having national missile defense. It's quite

simply - you hear people argue, well it won't protect against all hazards - the satchel charge, if somebody brings it up - the cruise missile, the thuds and [indisc.] that come down - I don't know where they come from, maybe Canada or Mexico. Well, it won't protect against them but it's like an airbag in your car and the airbag won't protect you getting hit by a train but it will sure help you out and provide you with [indisc.] protection.

The Congress is responsible for the defense of this nation. They [indisc.] in front of all of us, including the military so we're vulnerable. We have no defenses against this. As soon as it's technically feasible we're going to have it so I think that's safe to say - we're going to have it and we can talk about the timelines but I wanted everybody to hear the piece about what is that going to do to the National Guard. That's pretty significant.

Now let me fast forward over to a mission over on the Air Guard side. We could get a lot more sophistication on national missile defense but in the interest of time and cover some other areas. Let's talk about C-17s. C-17 is the new military transport that our nation's military is going to use. It's going to replace the C-141, ultimately the C-5, and even the C-130s. This is the transport plane of the future.

Our National Guard will be the second state, behind Mississippi, to receive C-17s and I think you'll see a decision that will do this this year. And these, we had some agreement, the active military and the National Guard, that this will be a National Guard unit. Now how do you think that is? Wouldn't you kind of think, well wouldn't those active duty guys rather have those and be able to control them. This is the Alaska National Guard not the National Alaska Guard - although you see us transforming into more and more operational missions, first provider missions. The active duty military - they're pretty smart fellows. They see what the Alaska National Guard has in Alaska as opposed to US Transportation Command and Air Mobility Command. If the National Guard has it, we can use it more as a Pacific resource. We have more ability to keep it in the Pacific.

Now what does that do for Alaska? That makes suddenly Alaska more relevant as a strategic force because it has the polar ability, because it has its own strategic assets to use that. And that aircraft also has relevance to our state missions. They can land at about 80 percent of the airfields in Alaska - the C-17s. Now you're probably not going to land it on a gravel strip out at Fort Yukon, but you could do it if you had to. We would also keep our C-130s. We'll still have four HC-130s - our refueling C-130s. As part of this package, we want to give them a roll off capability for refueling so we can have them as our standard transport aircraft or they could be used for a refueling mission.

But who again with the C-17s? This is not only - it's making us a first provider but it's the Alaska National Guard that is leading the way into making us more strategically relevant, whether it's national missile defense or whether it's strategic transport with the C-17s. That's pretty significant.

We've got this National Guard in - on one-hand, our identity is with the scouts and the Cold War. We're adjusting that to keep that alive today and into tomorrow. At the same time, we're getting involved in space and force provider missions. Those force provider missions are not only in what we are doing that match the missile defense for providing the forces to US Army Space Command. Our C-17s, where we're providing the strategic airlift capability to CINC PAC and to the PAC-AF Commander and to the Alcom Commander, but it's also - we anticipate a decision here, probably this week, at least this month, to go ahead and assume over a four-year period the responsibility for taking over the manning of the RAOC - the Regional Air Operations Center for the Alaska NORAD Region. This would bring in about 148 military positions to our National Guard. And that's important for the state because suddenly we have Alaskans doing these missions - Alaskans and their families who will stay here in the state doing those missions and also we're gaining technical expertise. And also, remember the pyramid I talked about, it's real important that this pyramid get a little bit steeper, and you do that by building common mission sites that people can rotate to. Where else could they rotate? Well, that's also the ultimate command post, we'll be the ultimate command post for national missile defense. [Indisc.] That's also skill sets that you see at Clear. Now, we're further

away from decisions that start the manning at Clear. In fact, we hit a pothole in the road just this last couple of weeks because people are nervous whether the Alaska National Guard can maintain the manning in a remote location and assume this whole mission.

I think it's fair to say that of those approximately 100 positions, that we can do most of them, if not all of them, so our proposal back to them is to start evolving into it and just see how far we can go. But the more structure we give out there and the steeper the pyramid, and the smarter we build these units and build a foundation of traditional guard bases rotational opportunities, and attractive packages, I think we can do that because we've seen, ever since WWII, that the military likes to be stationed in Alaska.

We pick off a lot of low hanging fruit from the active duty military that comes here. And there's another important consideration here, that the state is involved in some expense for our National Guard. That's part of the package. It's not a bad deal. You give us about \$10 million and we give you about \$330 million. That's a pretty good investment. Now we've seen that in the support we've had from the committees. But these two new missions are kind of neat because we get the missions, we get the people, we provide the forces but somebody else pays for the infrastructure. So that's the direction we're trying to go to. But hey, if we're going to become force providers, we want you to pay more of the freight, especially on these national level missions.

And while all of these have a cost involved, but I think we have the right to go out and seek alternative ways of funding for this. When you talk about the money coming in, that C-17 mission that we expect to see in Elmendorf, they have about \$100 million in military construction connected with that mission to build a facility.

The other piece of the debate is, should it just be a hangar and a headquarters of the C-17 or should we build it a little bigger for the C-5? Initially I said well let's don't put C-5s in there too - let's just deal with C-17 because the C-5s break more often and they'll be in the hangar all of the time - I won't be able to get our airplanes in there. But then I thought, well wait a minute, wait a minute - if we make it for the C-5s I've got a better bargaining chip to make the active duty

military pay for it. I say, okay, you use my hangar but you've got to pay for the maintenance, the lights, the water and all that stuff. So I think that's worth carefully looking at.

The other missions that are coming up - we are force providers in the rescue business and the RCC. We actually provide the forces to General Schwartz and he fights the forces, and they prosecute about one rescue a day over time. Those are Alaska Guardsmen that are doing that. We're also the force provider with 168 - they're our refueling ring. We provide the Alert aircraft, the KC 135 tanker, that provides a refueling capability everyday for third sovereignty air defense here in Alaska. That's an Alaska Guard plane.

We're a force provider in that we provide the forces to plan all movements of aircraft to Alaska. We actually do the planning, we approve the planning, we execute the plan. If we had a major movement through here, the North PAC route, it's your Alaska National Guard that is the hub of admiral control of that area refueling effort and all the other refueling rings that come up here.

You saw these recent missile launches - there are some classified missions where we provide the refueling support for that and the capability for that so we can monitor how those launches are going over in Russia. That's the Alaska National Guard doing that force provider part.

The other thing we're looking at as a new mission set is providing the range control, range safety for the Alaska Aerospace Development Corporation - AADC. The [indisc.] guard does that now. Now our challenge is, it's not a military mission so we have to be creative in how we combine the skill sets, but by taking on that mission, it gets us with another level in space. It's really unique here.

Again, I'll go back to the point. We have one foot in our Cold War identity of scouts and are protecting that. We have one foot, or one leg of that stool is a better way since we've got three feet here, one leg as a force provider, and then we've got one leg of that stool in space. That's pretty neat as we're expanding that out. So we're going out and seeking those missions.

My biggest concern here is, can we recruit, retain the full structure that we need for all of these new mission opportunities? My answer is, if we build it right we can. And my answer is to you, if we continue to get your support we can.

The other thing I think is, we are working with [indisc.] PAC to establish a combat search and rescue center of excellence for Pacific command here. Who does search and rescue better than anybody else? I suspect we're on the top of that list because we're out there doing it just about every day in some pretty darn tough conditions but, also outfitting our aircraft. On the Army Guard side, we have suddenly grown more sophisticated search and rescue helicopters than you see anywhere else in the Army structure. That's because we can make a case for it. That's because we needed the capacity here because of the missions we're flying and suddenly the sinking crew is looking and says, wow, they've got better capability than I do. We're also growing that to give us more relevance because the way you keep the National Guard alive is you get them relevant - strategic level missions. So, at the same time we're doing the Center of Excellence for Pacific Command and search and rescue, we're building an Army capability that has not existed before this time.

Number 2092

I think it's also well we talk about diversity. Some 30 percent of the Army Guard is Native, Native Alaskan. Unfortunately, too much of that is at the bottom and we've lost the ability to have that diversity throughout. But the Air Guard's a little different story. Their percentages of Native participation are not as much, because they are located primarily in the Fairbanks-Eielson area and the Anchorage area. Their technical skills are greater but I would like to mention to you real briefly, 36 members of Native Americans in the Air Guard - we have four chief master sergeants, two senior master sergeants, and four master sergeants. Last summer we graduated our first navigator who is an Alaska Native, Second Lt. Chris Prince (ph). The Command Chief Master Sergeant of the entire Alaska Air National Guard was Chief [indisc.] Ricky and he is an Alaska Native as well, so we're proud of that. So the [indisc.] in education and leadership and training is what we're about.

All of this fits together. Now let me just talk about what we're doing in other areas with the Alaska Army National Guard. We talked about the changing and evolution and scout battalions mission to a mission that they can still take pride in and do well and partner with some other states. We're also going on a rural affairs initiative. And our rural affairs initiative is to take all of the things that we do in rural Alaska with the purpose of increasing our image, our prestige, our recruiting, our retention, our education and make it, yet again, proud to be in the military and proud to be in the National Guard. We do a lot of things in rural Alaska. We have some presence there. We have drug demand reduction efforts there. We have emergency services efforts there. We have [indisc.] readiness training projects there. We have distance learning efforts there. So the thought is, why don't we get a link with our past through a program called Regimental [indisc.] Sergeants Major, and use that link with our past to make sure the National Guard of today takes a chapter out of the book of the active military and their regimental colonels that we stole from the British, and our Native population, our elders and their importance, and make sure we understand the culture, the needs, and what it takes us to be successful but at the same time focus pieces in one area at a time and grow Junior ROTC and fix the education system from a military perspective, and make sure we can do the recruiting, the retention, the professional development so we can continue the strong presence in rural Alaska.

[Indisc.] We now have real significant distance learning capabilities to the National Guard. Out of my headquarters at Ft. Richardson, and these are fully interactive, video capable, computer automated classrooms with distance learning packages to work on the education because we can't all come together every time we need to do stuff. We've also established those centers in Nome, in Bethel, and in Fairbanks. We're also partnering with the University to look at all of our band width requirements and we've identified what band width we needed, every company level location throughout rural Alaska. Again, to use our military requirements to help grow the educational requirements throughout the state.

Recruiting and retention is the biggest challenge I have. We've put retention NCO in our three rural battalions to work permanently on that. My recruiting is stronger than

my retention so I've got to work on both ends of that. The retention is tied to professional development and making sure that the soldiers in the [indisc.] have valid military jobs to do and we can keep them in the National Guard.

Some other things that we're doing - we have a fully manned weapons of mass destruction civil support team so we're able to go out and provide forces on an interagency basis for any community first responder and assist them in the rapid assessment identification detection of any weapons of mass destruction use and fully protect our individuals and fully and rapidly identify the hazard that is there and to rapidly recommend to those force responders what action should they take in a chemical incident or a biological incident or a nuclear incident. Pretty significant capability, especially if you consider that the threat to our society in the future is going to be an asymmetric threat. It's not going to be an attack on our shores. It's not going to be another Desert Storm-Desert Shield, but it will be these asymmetric attacks on our communications infrastructure, on our power grids, weapons of mass destruction that can easily be brought in and that's another way we'll [indisc.].

The last thing I'll talk about is we're also working with other states to establish a compact so we can more readily go to their defense and they can come to our defense on any significant emergency matter. One thing that we're establishing this year is a 24 hour day, 7 day a week, 365 day a year, state emergency coordination center capability that will do - when all these [indisc.] pieces together rapidly. Now that I've been in my job for two years and my job begins with emergency response, we are not ready to rapidly respond. We'll do a very, very good job when we get spun up. There's a lot of scenarios here that don't give us the time to get spun up. It's not people in that center to just be there to answer the phone - people that know who the right people are to call and contact wherever they are in the state at the first responder level to the legislative level to the state level to the state police. It's people that have got a practice checklist for - those of you that have been in the military understand SOPs and practice and training and you fight the way you train and if you don't have those checklists and know what to do and know who to go to get the resources, you don't know where the resources are in the state, and you don't know which

buttons to push to get the military response, the FEMA response, the first agency response, you're going to lose so many lives in the first 72 hours that you'll never recover from it. You'll continually deal with that crisis and why weren't you ready to do this. That piece is integrated with the military piece and the national guard's piece.

I'll say, kind of in conclusion, the Alaska National Guard - it's the Alaska National Guard and our first mission begins with responding to the emergencies of the citizens of this state. We will protect that and at the same time we're going to lead our nation into new mission areas and at the same time that we're leading the nation into new mission areas, we are going to grow opportunities for Alaska.

Mr. Chairman, I thank you for the opportunity to speak. In many ways - I know I'm singing to the choir here because everybody on this committee [indisc.] and we have your support individually and even at the national level now, with Senator Pearce and her Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS).

TAPE 01-2, SIDE B

CO-CHAIRMAN MULDER noted the Alaska National Guard received \$100,000 last year for tuition assistance. He asked whether that program has been effective and whether Major General Oates would encourage its continuation.

ADJUTANT GENERAL OATES said it is the single, most effective recruiting and professional tool he has. It is the biggest impact states can have on recruitment and retention. The basis of the military today and the technical missions I'm talking about require education and continuing education. It had a tremendous effect throughout the Guard. He didn't think there is anything more important that the legislature could do than continue the tuition assistance program.

CO-CHAIRMAN MULDER noted if the Alaska National Guard's role is expanding, filling the ranks will be a challenge. He asked whether the tuition assistance program will be a critical component in filling those ranks.

ADJUTANT GENERAL OATES said some states have paid full tuition at their state universities for members of the national guard. Someday that will be worth exploring in Alaska.

SENATOR AUSTERMAN asked whether the Alaska National Guard currently

has an incentive program to join.

ADJUTANT GENERAL OATES said it has many: a new Army incentive provides for laptop computers for new recruits, which enables recruits to take distance learning courses; tuition assistance; and bonuses for shortage skills. The military has always operated on the basis of having a very proactive program to recruit and retain through promotions and education for professional development. He noted the Alaska National Guard has seen tremendous growth in recruitment in Kodiak.

SENATOR AUSTERMAN asked if the Alaska National Guard offers a cash bonus for enlistment.

ADJUTANT GENERAL OATES said that bonus changes over time so he would get back to Senator Austerman with an answer.

REPRESENTATIVE MURKOWSKI asked when the C-17s are coming.

ADJUTANT GENERAL OATES thought the decision to buy additional C-17s for Alaska and Hawaii will be made this year. He thought the earliest they would be here is in three or four years. He noted he believes it is very important that Alaska get eight C-17s. He believes it is very important that we have a unit that, although it is a national guard unit, is associated and has active duty crew members and Air Force reserve crew members in the unit at the same time. That brings the strength of all to the equation.

Number 360

CO-CHAIRMAN WILKEN asked what numbers are involved with the C-17s, national missile defense and increased recruitment.

ADJUTANT GENERAL OATES answered the number for national missile defense is approximately 300. The numbers to assume the air operations center at Alaska NORAD Region is about 148. If the Alaska National Guard assumes the entire mission at Clear, that will total about 90. The C-17 mission would probably not mean an increase in numbers because the military would be giving away some C-130s. Over five years he estimated an increase of 500 to 1,000 people.

CO-CHAIRMAN MULDER asked Adjutant General Oates if he would give a presentation to the committee on ballistic missile defense at another time. He plans to meet with Major General Nance and will invite him to Alaska. In addition, General Kadish will be visiting Fairbanks. He said that in the near future, a decision to move materials to Shimyea may be made. That may be done in advance of the national missile defense decision because national missile defense is a threat based program. Moving materials there will not break the ABM Treaty. Two significant events coming up are a

booster test in the next two to three months and the next integrated flight test in May or June. If those two tests work, he believes there is a good chance the President will decide to proceed.

Number 678

CO-CHAIRMAN WILKEN commended Adjutant General Oates for his service in Alaska and the country. He announced that all members are invited to Northern Edge in Ketchikan on March 21 and then adjourned the meeting at 5:01 p.m.