

**HEARING TO RECEIVE TESTIMONY ON U.S.
NORTHERN COMMAND AND U.S. SOUTHERN
COMMAND IN REVIEW OF THE DEFENSE
AUTHORIZATION REQUEST FOR FISCAL
YEAR 2012 AND THE FUTURE YEARS DE-
FENSE PROGRAM**

TUESDAY, APRIL 5, 2011

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:34 a.m. in room SD-G50, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Senator Carl Levin (chairman), presiding.

Committee members present: Senators Levin, Lieberman, Reed, McCaskill, Udall, Hagan, Blumenthal, McCain, Chambliss, Brown, Ayotte, and Cornyn.

Committee staff members present: Richard D. DeBobes, staff director; and Leah C. Brewer, nominations and hearings clerk.

Majority staff members present: Richard W. Fieldhouse, professional staff member; Jessica L. Kingston, research assistant; Michael J. Kuiken, professional staff member; Jason W. Maroney, counsel; and Michael J. Noblet, professional staff member.

Minority staff members present: David M. Morriss, minority staff director; Adam J. Barker, professional staff member; Daniel A. Lerner, professional staff member; and Michael J. Sistik, research assistant.

Staff assistants present: Jennifer R. Knowles, Kathleen A. Kulenkampff, and Christine G. Lang.

Committee members' assistants present: Christopher Griffin, assistant to Senator Lieberman; Carolyn Chuhta, assistant to Senator Reed; Gordon Peterson, assistant to Senator Webb; Casey Howard, assistant to Senator Udall; Roger Pena, assistant to Senator Hagan; Laurie Rubiner and Ethan Saxon, assistants to Senator Blumenthal; Lenwood Landrum, assistant to Senator Sessions; Brad Bowman, assistant to Senator Ayotte; and Dave Hanke, assistant to Senator Cornyn.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR CARL LEVIN, CHAIRMAN

Chairman LEVIN. Good morning, everybody.

We're pleased to have two distinguished military leaders with us today to talk about security in our hemisphere: General Doug Fraser, the Commander of the U.S. Southern Command; and Admiral

Sandy Winnefeld, the Commander of U.S. Northern Command and the Commander of the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD).

We welcome you both. We want to start by thanking you both for your distinguished service to our Nation, and ask you to also give our thanks to the men and women who serve with you for their tireless service and for the numerous contributions that they all make to our Nation's security. We also offer our gratitude to your families and the families of all of the personnel, since they share in the sacrifices of that service and because their support is so critically important to our success.

General Fraser, President Obama recently traveled the Southern Command area of responsibility, the AOR, and this trip was the President's second trip to Latin America. His decision to travel to SOUTHCOM despite the beginning of international military efforts in Libya is a testament to the strategic importance of the Nation states that are located in your AOR.

The three countries that the President visited—Brazil, Chile, and El Salvador—highlighted the spectrum of issues that your command confronts each day. In Brazil, President Obama found a rapidly emerging global partner with shared values both in terms of economics and security. Brazil is the world's seventh largest economy and a key trade partner in the hemisphere. In terms of security, their military has played an important role in supporting United Nations peacekeeping missions with 2,200 troops, military observers, and police officers on three continents. Its contributions to the U.N. effort in Haiti are particularly important as that nation struggles to rebuild.

In Chile, the President visited a country that has made the transition from a dictatorship to democracy. Chile as well as Colombia and Mexico is sharing its expertise in security with nations in Central America where transnational criminal organizations have produced havoc on the people of the region.

In El Salvador, the President visited a nation suffering from the scourge of drug cartels, predominantly from Mexico, but also from Colombia. The United States has been increasingly engaged in Mexico and Central America in terms of security and fighting criminal organizations trafficking in drugs, arms, money, and people. As additional resources and attention have been brought to bear in Mexico, some of the cartels have moved into Central America. As a result of this shift, both the administration and the Mexican government are focusing more on Central America, how to bolster these governments, and how to have a regional approach to security as, General Fraser, you note in your opening statement.

However, General, you are in a complicated position, as no one has to tell you. The solutions needed to address the issues associated with the drug cartels and broader illicit trafficking issues primarily require the action of civilian law enforcement agencies, not the military. However, in many cases it is the military that has the capabilities and resources required to confront the drug cartels.

So our committee looks forward to hearing you describe how SOUTHCOM is addressing this complex environment and how this committee can assist you in this important endeavor.

U.S. Northern Command is responsible for the defense of the homeland and for providing defense support to civil authorities in response to domestic natural or manmade disasters. Admiral Winnefeld is also dual-hatted as the Commander of NORAD, which has the mission to provide aerospace warning, aerospace control, and maritime warning for North America.

The NORTHCOM area of responsibility consists of all of North America, including Mexico. Given the high level of violence in Mexico, especially related to drug trafficking and the flow of money and guns from our country into Mexico, we'd like to hear you assess, Admiral, the current situation and the cooperation between our two militaries to help defeat the criminal organizations.

As part of the mission of providing defense support to civil authorities, Northern Command must work closely and cooperatively with other Federal agencies and with all the States on plans and coordination for emergency response to domestic disasters. Admiral Winnefeld has been working with the State governors and the National Guard forces to improve their combined capabilities.

One of the initiatives under way is a concept called "Dual Status Command," which is intended to allow State and Federal military forces to work together to support a governor's needs for disaster assistance, and we'll be interested to hear more about that effort.

Northern Command is also the combatant command responsible for the operation of the Ground-based Midcourse Defense System, the GMD system, to defend the homeland against the threat of a limited ballistic missile attack from nations such as North Korea and Iran. The GMD system has had two consecutive flight test failures, more recently in December, and we look forward to hearing Admiral Winnefeld's views on what we need to do to make the system work reliably and effectively, including adequate testing and system enhancement.

There has been discussion of the administration's hedge strategy for missile defense of the homeland in case the future threat of North Korean or potential Iranian long-range missiles emerges more rapidly or in greater numbers than now expected or if the development of the Standard Missile 3 Block IIB interceptor has technical problems or delays. One component of that hedge strategy has been the continued testing and assessment of the two-stage ground-based interceptor. However, there are numerous other hedge options under way or under consideration, including extra silos planned at Fort Greely, Alaska. So we'd be interested to know, Admiral, what your views are on appropriate hedging strategies.

Again, we thank you both for appearing here this morning and look forward to your testimony, and I call on Senator McCain.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR JOHN McCAIN

Senator McCAIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I'd like to join you in welcoming our witnesses today and extend my appreciation to Admiral Winnefeld and General Fraser for their many years of distinguished service to our Nation. I'd also like to recognize the service and sacrifice of the many selfless men and women serving under your commands.

While the recent events across the Middle East and North Africa have consumed the attention of the Congress and the Nation, we

shouldn't ignore the complex set of security challenges and opportunity that reside just across our borders. Transnational criminal organizations continue to wreak havoc throughout Central and South America with ruthless tenacity. They exploit weaknesses in local and national security forces, bribe government officials, and move easily across porous borders. Plush with cash, these groups also have shown an ability to leverage technology and quickly adapt existing detection capabilities, as evidenced recently by the discovery of fully submersible mini- submarines in Ecuador and Colombia.

I have both recently been to Central and South America, as well as just a week ago toured the Arizona-Mexico border, and I can attest firsthand that we must remain ever vigilant to problems in our hemisphere.

In Southern Command's area of responsibility, we have seen a marked increase in foreign nations attempting to influence the region, including some that cause me great concern. According to your testimony, General Fraser, Iran has nearly doubled the number of embassies in the region in the last decade and the Chinese involvement in our hemisphere has continued to grow in dramatic fashion.

In Northern Command's area of responsibility, Mexico, under the determined leadership of President Calderon, has shown remarkable courage in its fight against the cartels. But this fight has not come without significant costs. Since 2006 nearly 35,000 Mexicans have lost their lives as a result of drug-related violence. To put that in perspective, during that same period of time 21,000 Afghans, civilian Afghans, have lost their lives.

Such tragic loss of innocent civilian lives underscores the necessity of continued U.S. support to our partners that leverages their courage with our technology, sustained commitment, and complementing efforts on our side of the border. These organized criminal gangs operating across international borders threaten not only our neighbors to the south, but also American citizens. Despite what some in the administration have claimed, violence along the southern border continues to rage unabated and, though we've made gains in securing our border, it's not yet secure.

The situation requires further investment within the U.S., including personnel, technology, and information- sharing between Federal, State, and local authorities, as well as with our neighbors, which helped in apprehending those responsible for the killing of U.S. Border Patrol agent Brian Terry.

I'm interested in how forces under Northern Command are working with their law enforcement counterparts along the border and what can be done to improve and expand.

I'm pleased that both of you are testifying jointly before the committee today. Given that many of the topics we will address today span both of your areas of responsibility, a close partnership and robust coordination between your commands will obviously prove to be fundamental to your success.

I thank you both for being with us today and I look forward to your testimony.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator McCain.

Admiral, I think we'll start with you.

STATEMENT OF ADM JAMES A. WINNEFELD, JR., USN, COMMANDER, U.S. NORTHERN COMMAND/COMMANDER, NORTH AMERICAN AEROSPACE DEFENSE COMMAND

Admiral WINNEFELD. Chairman Levin, Senator McCain, and distinguished members of the Armed Services Committee: Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you this morning. If I may, I'd also like to thank you for both of your kind remarks regarding the men and women who work for us. Many of them are probably listening right now and your remarks speak directly to them. So thank you for your comments.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you.

Admiral WINNEFELD. I'm also delighted to be alongside my close friend and partner, General Doug Fraser. In the Western Hemisphere we work very closely together and it's delightful to be able to appear with him.

As the commander of U.S. NORTHCOM, responsible for defense of the United States and in the case of NORAD for the air defense of North America, it's my privilege to work with the talented team of men and women executing a uniquely diverse set of homeland defense, civil support, and theater security cooperation missions. Our daily efforts include countering terrorism and transnational criminal organizations, preparing to support our Federal and State partners in the wake of a natural or manmade disaster, air defense against both internal and external threats, maritime and ballistic missile defense, and of course a growing focus on the Arctic.

I'd like to highlight two of these areas in advance of our discussion this morning. First, the tragic events in Japan over the last several weeks only highlight the importance of being prepared to respond to disasters, including those providing no notice, such as earthquakes, and those involving accidental or intentional release of harmful substances, such as, in Japan's case, radionuclides.

U.S. Northern Command plays a key role in our Nation's response to these disasters, principally in support of FEMA's role as the lead Federal agency, but ultimately providing support to the affected States by bringing either additional capacity or specialized capabilities to bear that our partners may lack.

Time is our enemy in these disasters and we search every day for ways to become more agile in responding to the needs of our partners.

We also stress our supporting role, and I'm pleased to be able to report that, as Senator Levin mentioned, we've made considerable strides over the past year in achieving unity of command and control of State and Federal military forces during a disaster.

I can also report that U.S. NORTHCOM's relationship with the National Guard, which is such a capable partner and on whom I rely so much for my mission accomplishment in several key areas, is superb.

The second area I'd like to highlight is U.S. NORTHCOM's support for the ongoing struggle to disrupt and dismantle the transnational criminal organizations, or TCOs, that are having such corrosive effects inside our hemisphere. We're working hard to both support law enforcement agencies within the United States

and, in conjunction with U.S. SOUTHCOM, to support the efforts of our partner nations.

Presidents Obama and Calderon have underscored our shared responsibilities as nations: on the U.S. side of the border, to reduce drug consumption and illicit flows of arms and money; and on the Mexican side to interdict drugs going north and to strengthen the rule of law so that criminals are put in jail and kept there.

The Mexican government, as you pointed out, has displayed exemplary moral, physical, and political courage in undertaking this important struggle, because they know this is about the future of Mexico, and I take my hat off to them for that fact. The Mexican military has been asked by its civilian leadership to joint with Mexican law enforcement agencies to support this struggle in the right way, respectful of Mexico's democratic ideals and the Nation's commitment to the rule of law.

It's been a difficult struggle. As Senator McCain pointed out, since December 2006 35,000 Mexicans have lost their lives in TCO-related violence. The criminality extends far beyond drugs to extortion, robbery, kidnapping, and trafficking in persons. I salute Mexico's police and security forces for their courage, skill, and determination and for the progress they have made in building institutions like the Federal police and in taking down over two dozen of the most wanted criminals in their country, progress for which they do not always get the credit they deserve.

Today the Mexican military is confronting concurrent challenges: How to counter a sophisticated, unconventional threat by integrating intelligence and operations; how to work jointly with each other and with their interagency partners; and how to fully inculcate respect for human rights into everything they do.

We know this is hard work because we've been down the same road and in some ways we're still on the same road. So I tell my Mexican partners that we don't know it all, we've made our own mistakes along the way, and we seek the kind of engagement that helps them benefit from our experiences. But while I always want to do more to help our friends in Mexico, I want to state publicly and very clearly that the first and most important principle we observe in this struggle is respect for Mexican sovereignty. We have much to offer, but Mexico is always in the lead in Mexico.

The Mexican government has a strategy to combat organized crime. They have defined with us a substantive framework to guide our cooperation and have invited us to work with them to support their efforts. But again, they are always in the lead in their own country.

If together we can maintain our resolve, if we can be responsive to their requests, if we can work effectively together to support their operational progress, and if we can continue to make progress on our own side of the border, then together we stand a good chance of carrying the day against the TCOs. And if not, the corrosive effects of the TCOs will continue to pose a danger within both of our countries.

I want to thank you, the members, and also your superb committee staff for your steadfast support for our men and women, both in uniform and in civilian clothes, who work hard on these and many other difficult problems each and every day.

Once again, thank you for the opportunity to appear today and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Admiral Winnefeld follows:]

Chairman LEVIN. Admiral, thank you so much.
General Fraser.

**STATEMENT OF GEN. DOUGLAS M. FRASER, USAF,
COMMANDER, U.S. SOUTHERN COMMAND**

General FRASER. Chairman Levin, Senator McCain, distinguished members of the committee: I also want to thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today and to discuss United States Southern Command's accomplishments and our efforts in Latin American the Caribbean. I'm also very pleased to share this table with my good friend and counterpart from U.S. Northern Command, Admiral Sandy Winnefeld. As Senator McCain mentioned, we do have a very close cooperation that we work on a very, very routine basis, not only personally between the two of us, but our staffs, and that continues to grow very diligently. We work that very carefully, and that is to say that we work to make sure there is no disconnect and there is no seam in the conduct of U.S. forces within the Western Hemisphere across our borders.

Over the past year, the United States Southern Command worked in close collaboration with other U.S. Federal agencies and our international partners to respond to natural disasters, like the earthquakes in Haiti and Chile, and to address the ongoing threats to regional security. This year, with the continued support of the Congress, we will promote our U.S. national and regional security interests through enduring partnerships.

United States Southern Command engages with our military partners in the region to accomplish three broad goals: to defend the United States, to help maintain security and stability within the region, and to build enduring military-to-military partnerships. These partnerships, formed through routine education, training, and military exercises, are the focus of our daily engagement activities.

Using this foundation, U.S. Southern Command then focuses on two immediate challenges. One are natural disasters, like those we witnessed last year; and the evolving threat posed by transnational criminal organizations and the illicit activities they pursue. Hurricanes impact the northern part of our region every year.

To help mitigate the impact of these storms, we help build emergency operations centers and warehouses for relief supplies that our partners can use to direct their respective domestic responses to natural disasters. We remain prepared to conduct disaster relief operations whenever needed and whenever requested.

In regards to transnational criminal organizations, we are working closely with our interagency and international partners to address this challenge. Transnational criminal organizations engage in illicit trafficking of drugs, arms, money, and people across porous borders throughout the region, as we mentioned earlier into the United States, but also abroad, into Africa and into Europe. They do not respect national sovereignty, laws, governments, or human life, and the violence they use in conducting their illicit activities presents a significant security challenge in the region.

Nowhere is this more evident than in Central America, which is besieged by gangs and transnational criminal organizations who conduct illicit trafficking with near impunity and are causing unprecedented levels of violence. The northern triangle of Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras is the deadliest zone in the world outside of active war zones.

To address this problem, the newly formed Central American Citizen Security Partnership announced recently by President Obama supports the multilateral efforts of the Central American nations and builds upon existing U.S. interagency efforts. In addition, it leverages the capabilities of partners such as Canada, Colombia, and Mexico in Central America. U.S. Southern Command will support this effort.

In closing, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to thank this committee for your support in funding the construction of our new headquarters in Miami. This state of the art building enhances our internal and external collaboration, improves our ability to conduct interagency operations, and raises the quality of life for our assigned personnel. On behalf of the men and women of United States Southern Command, I want to thank you.

I'd also like to thank this committee and your very diligent staff for your continued support to our men and women in uniform.

I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of General Fraser follows:]

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, General.

Let's try a 7-minute first round.

Admiral, let me start with you. According to a recent press article, leaders of the National Guard and the Army Reserve, including General McKinley, who's chief of the National Guard Bureau, told a House committee last week that they believe that current law should be changed to allow the Reserves to be activated to respond to a natural disaster.

Can you tell us whether you agree with their view that it would be beneficial to modify the law to allow the Reserves to be called up to help States respond to natural disasters? Are you working with the Council of Governors to address the concerns that they have expressed about that proposal?

Admiral WINNEFELD. Thank you, Senator. Yes, I do agree that it would be helpful for the law to be changed so that Reserves could be involuntarily activated in the wake of a disaster. I appreciate the comments that were made by General McKinley and his colleagues last week. I would point out that we are working closely with the Council of Governors. We want to make sure that they are comfortable with this. I believe that this initiative should come from the governors and I believe that eventually it will. I think we've formed such a very good partnership in the wake of the establishment of the Council of Governors that I think we're on a very good trajectory there.

So again, I think its something that we would never want to have to come to this committee and explain why we were not able to bring all elements of national power to bear to help American citizens that are in danger, but I think taking a deliberate approach so that the governors are comfortable is the right way to go.

Chairman LEVIN. Well, I would hope you would pursue that course, because it just doesn't seem sensible to me not to have that capability. We tried it once before here and the governors reacted negatively, I guess because they weren't involved in the takeoff. But it is important that we work that out so that, whether the initiative comes from the governors or whether—wherever it comes from, that the governors are comfortable with it and understand that it can make a real difference in response to a disaster.

Now, I think that there's an initiative, talking about initiatives, which you've undertaken for dual-status commanders for Federal-State military cooperation in responding to domestic disasters. Can you describe how that concept would work in practice and where is it? Has this been implemented in any of the States yet?

Admiral WINNEFELD. Yes, sir. This is another outgrowth of the efforts of the Council of Governors. As you are aware, there has been some historical friction between the State governments and the Federal Government regarding command and control of military forces inside a State in the wake of a disaster. Understandably, the State governors would like to have control because they are sovereign States; and also understandably, the Federal Government believes it has a vested interest in Federal forces being used legally, ethically, safely, and cost-effectively.

What we've done is, historically for deliberately planned events, such as support for political conventions or inaugurations or Superbowls or what have you, is a deliberate 6-month planning process for a dual-status commander, in which a National Guardsman would be dual qualified to command Federal troops in a chain of command leading to the President and State troops in a chain of command leading to the supported State governor.

We asked the question last year why this would not work in the wake of a disaster, as long as we properly trained the National Guardsman that would be potentially in command, provided the proper support for that National Guardsman's staff, to include a Title 10 deputy commander and some supporting staff elements that can bring some Federal expertise to bear.

We put this in motion under some very good cooperation between the National Guard Bureau, U.S. NORTHCOM, the Office of the Secretary of Defense, and a number of other key players. We prototyped it in the States of Florida, Texas, and California over the course of late summer. It worked very well. In particular, a very intense training program that we have for these particular National Guardsmen who would be chosen to do this kind of response. Then we took it to the Council of Governors and it's been approved by the Council.

Since then, we have trained 31 National Guardsmen from 31 different States to be State JTF commanders who could be dual status qualified, and we will have the remainder of the 54, because of the States and the territories and D.C., trained by the end of the summer. The only thing we're really waiting for is the fact that there has to be a memorandum of agreement between the affected State and the Federal Government. We're trying to get those memoranda done in advance of a disaster so that we can turn on a dime when the disaster occurs, the President and the governor

can agree that a dual-status commander is appropriate, and we believe it normally will be appropriate, and then off we go.

It's a tremendous initiative. I'm really grateful to my State partners and my National Guard partners for making this work, and it's really transformed our relationship and the way we do business.

Chairman LEVIN. Well, we thank you for that. As I understand it, there's a deputy commander who's a Title 10 commander underneath that dual-status commander; is that correct?

Admiral WINNEFELD. Yes, sir, that is correct.

Chairman LEVIN. Do you need any legislative authority, legal authority, or do you have all you need to make this happen?

Admiral WINNEFELD. We have the legal authority that we need to make all this happen, sir. But I think tied to this is your previous question of activating the Guard involuntarily—excuse me, the Reserves involuntarily, in the wake of a disaster. We're exploring right now with the council carefully how we might make a legislative proposal that would codify the contingency dual-status commander in legislation, and I think that would give a lot more confidence to the governors in their willingness to accept having the Reserves involuntarily activated.

So we're exploring that right now. It's in its early stages and I'm sure we'll be able to report back to you.

Chairman LEVIN. I would think that the agreement should be signed before the problem. You said you're hoping that it would be signed before the problem. I mean, the time to get it signed is not after the disaster. So would you keep this committee informed on progress that you're making in that regard? Would you also send us a copy of what I assume would be a form agreement that would apply to all 54 units? Would that be separate, a different kind of contract with each, or would it be a form?

Admiral WINNEFELD. We have sent to the National Governors Association a straw man, if you will, if what a memorandum would look like. Because the individual States are sovereign States, they will want to conclude a separate agreement with the Federal Government. But we believe and certainly hope that they will be relatively similar, with only minor modifications based on the particular laws of the State.

But I would be happy to supply you with that draft memorandum.

Chairman LEVIN. Would you do that?

Admiral WINNEFELD. Yes, sir.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you.

My time is up. Senator McCain.

Senator MCCAIN. Admiral Winnefeld, we mentioned, both of us mentioned in opening remarks, that 35,000 Mexican citizens have been killed in the drug cartel situation in Mexico. You've been in your job for about a year. Would you agree that the drug cartels pose an existential threat to the Government of Mexico?

Admiral WINNEFELD. Sir, I don't believe they pose an existential threat to the government. They don't have political ambition to take down the government of Mexico and I don't think that's—

Senator MCCAIN. No, but they have ambitions to control certain areas of Mexico.

Admiral WINNEFELD. They have ambitions to preserve their markup share and to have the freedom to maneuver, certainly to ply their evil trade, if you will, in Mexico and in the United States, yes, sir.

Senator MCCAIN. Have you seen an increase or a decrease in violence in the last year since you've been in command?

Admiral WINNEFELD. I think that the violence has actually increased, and I think part of that has to do with increasing competition among the cartels and I think that part of that has to do with the Calderon government's courageous decision to continue this fight and not back off of the cartels.

Senator MCCAIN. Have you been briefed that in Arizona there is between somewhere around 100 or more guides that are sitting on mountains in Arizona guiding the drug traffickers across the border and up to Phoenix, AZ?

Admiral WINNEFELD. Sir, I was not aware that there are guides on the mountains guiding them. It wouldn't surprise me if they have some sort of an arrangement set up to get their people where they want them to go.

Senator MCCAIN. And you're aware that about 40 percent or 50 percent of the marijuana smuggled into the United States from Mexico comes through the Tucson sector of our border?

Admiral WINNEFELD. Yes, sir, I'm aware of that.

Senator MCCAIN. So what is your prediction as to what will happen here with the Mexican efforts to bring these cartels under control?

Admiral WINNEFELD. Well, it's very hard, as we found in other places where we've been involved in some sort of a struggle, to predict anything definitively. However, I would say that, as I mentioned in my opening remarks, that the Mexican military and overall security forces are undergoing a very important transition right now, that I think is going to lead to more success on their part.

They're learning more about how to do the sort of irregular work. They are working much more closely together. They are seeking our help in the right way. And I believe that the opportunity exists, if we can support them properly, if they can continue the progress that they're making, that they can turn the corner on this. But it still remains to be seen.

Senator MCCAIN. Would you give—would your assessment of our border, U.S.-Mexico border, as being secure?

Admiral WINNEFELD. Sir, I would say that security is not a binary answer, yes or no. It is secure to a degree. I don't think it's secure to the degree that any of us would want it to be, but I think there has been progress over the last couple of years, at least. And we're determined to support our law enforcement partners as well as we can to enhance their efforts to make it even more secure.

But it would be false to say that it's perfectly secure, absolutely.

Senator MCCAIN. Well, some of us believe that the increase in the level of violence in Mexico has exceeded our efforts to secure the border. And on the Mexican southern border they have a lot of work to do to secure their border; is that correct?

Admiral WINNEFELD. Absolutely, yes, sir.

Senator MCCAIN. General Fraser, what effect has the failure to ratify the U.S.-Colombia Free Trade Agreement had on our relations with Colombia?

General FRASER. Senator, from a military-to-military relationship we still have very, very close relationships and continue to do that. I would see an agreement on a free trade agreement as a very positive, beneficial aspect for our cooperation with them, because I see a growing capacity to support the capabilities of the armed forces and law enforcement capabilities to then address the issues that they have within their countries.

Senator MCCAIN. Recent press reports that Chavez, Hugo Chavez, is purchasing \$15 billion in weapons, tanks, submarines, helicopters, primarily from Russia, China, and Spain. What's that all about?

General FRASER. Senator, I can't tell you exactly why President Chavez has chosen to purchase that level of weapons, and I can't confirm the \$15 billion number. It's still a large number, between 8 and \$12 billion, that he's made agreements with various countries for.

Senator MCCAIN. Is that destabilizing?

General FRASER. Senator, I don't see the fact of purchasing those weapons as a destabilizing factor within the region. My bigger concern on the purchase of weapons is the number of automatic weapons that he has purchased as a part of those agreements and the potential that those could make it into the hands of illicit or illegal armed groups. That is my bigger concern.

Senator MCCAIN. The Chinese have increased their presence dramatically in the Southern Hemisphere, would you agree, General?

General FRASER. Yes, sir, I would.

Senator MCCAIN. And their reasons are purely for natural resource access reasons in your view?

General FRASER. I see it as a very complex relationship, Senator. I see both diplomatic efforts as well as commercial. There is a growing effort also in the defense area, with exchanges with military members within the region, as well as also selling arms like K-8 aircraft to Venezuela as well as defense radars. So there is a growing effort both commercial, diplomatic, with Latin American countries, but I would argue they're doing the same thing looking for markups within China as well.

Senator MCCAIN. We hear continued reports about these gangs of human smugglers, drugs, criminal gangs, that now seem to be transnational in nature, rotating from places like Salvador and Honduras and others, up to Mexico and into the United States. Do you see that as on the increase or how serious a problem do you view that?

General FRASER. Senator, it is a serious problem. The transnational nature of it, we don't see it within the gangs at the same level we see it within the drug trafficking organizations and other illicit activities. We still see it very much localized, but there are large numbers of gangs and they are starting to make some transnational connections, but those are really more through those other organizations, not the gangs themselves.

The gangs, though, in trying to get their credibility within the streets are increasing the levels of violence to show and dem-

onstrate that credibility, and that's the growing problem I see with gangs, within Central America especially.

Senator MCCAIN. Just one question I forgot to ask, Admiral Winnefeld. Do you know whether the cost of an ounce of cocaine on the street in Des Moines is up or down?

Admiral WINNEFELD. Sir, I don't know whether it's up or down. Over which period of time?

Senator MCCAIN. In the last year.

Admiral WINNEFELD. I don't know, but I can find that.

Senator MCCAIN. Isn't that the best measurement of whether we are succeeding or failing in stopping the flow of drugs into this country?

Admiral WINNEFELD. Sir, I think it's a very complex metric, and I'm very suspicious, frankly, of numerical metrics we apply to any of this, because it's a supply and demand problem. The biggest engine of this whole challenge that we face is U.S. drug demand and if drug demand goes up, of course, the price is going to go up. If supply goes down, the price is going to go up as well.

So I don't have my arms around exactly whether it's a demand problem or a supply problem that would be driving that principally in recent months.

Senator MCCAIN. But the number has not changed in your view?

Admiral WINNEFELD. As far as I'm aware, it hasn't changed. But I'm not sure, sir.

Senator MCCAIN. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator McCain.

Senator Lieberman.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

Admiral and General, thank you for your testimony. Thanks for your leadership. You're both at the command of important commands that really affect the security of the American people. These tend not to be in the news today except with regard to the violence in Mexico and drugs coming into the U.S., but on a daily basis, the testimony that both of you have filed, which really is very interesting, important reading, shows that you're doing critically important work.

I'd say, wearing my other hat as chair of the Homeland Security Committee, Admiral, I think you've done a really exceptional job at negotiating agreements with the governors, between the governors and the Department of Defense and really, effectively, each other and the adjutant generals, that have created the opportunity for a level of preparedness and response to disasters, both natural disasters and unnatural, which is to say terrorist attacks, that is really quite impressive, and I thank you very much for it.

Frankly, I think if more people both in Congress and throughout the country knew where we are on all that, they'd feel more secure. Of course, these are all applications of lessons learned from the two national traumas that we had, both 9-11—different kinds of traumas: 9-11 and then Katrina and the failure of our government to protect our people.

Let me focus in first on part of that. The Department of Defense has transitioned now from an initial plan to have three so-called CBRNE consequence management response forces to now having

ten homeland response forces and one DOD CBRNE response force. I thought it would be helpful if you just sort of described that system and where you think we are in our level of preparedness to respond based on it, because it brings to bear the capacities of the Department of Defense to protect the American people in the event of a disaster.

Admiral WINNEFELD. Yes, sir. Thank you. If I could very briefly first thank you for the accolade on the work we've done in partnership with the governors and the States. But I would be remiss if I did not point out that it's a two-way street and they've been wonderful partners to work with.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Good. I agree.

Admiral WINNEFELD. Second, on the CBRNE response enterprise, the enterprise is going through a transition right now. Currently it is more federally-focused than it is State-focused, but there's capability on both sides of that. It begins with very small teams, 57 of them. Obviously, each State has at least one, 22-person civil support teams that can respond to an event like this and really diagnose it and figure out what's really happened and what kind of response.

Senator LIEBERMAN. So every State has one of those?

Admiral WINNEFELD. Every State, and there are 57. California I think has two.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Right, right.

Admiral WINNEFELD. Then within the National Guard there are CERFPs, we call them. I can get you the acronym, but it's a couple hundred people who can respond a little more robustly than a CST can. Then on the Federal side we have two—it's an unfortunate acronym—CSMRF—contingency response forces for CBRNE, that are able to deploy in response to one of these disasters.

The choice was made in the QDR, and I fully agree with it, to transition this enterprise, first to make it a little bit more state-centric and less Federal-centric, to give it more lifesaving capability, and to make it a more rapidly responsive force. That's the transition that we're going through right now. By the end of this year, we will have a single large Federal response force that's larger than one of the CSMRFs right now.

Senator LIEBERMAN. And the number is about what, number of personnel?

Admiral WINNEFELD. The number under the CSMRF—I've got the exact numbers. I can get it to you. But the DSRF, the new, will have 5200 people and the CSMRF is right now around 4500 people.

Senator LIEBERMAN. And their capacities?

Admiral WINNEFELD. They will have lifesaving.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Right.

Admiral WINNEFELD. They will be able to do search and extraction under very challenging circumstances, radiological, chemical, bio, that sort of thing. They will have a lot of medical capability; much more transportation capability, helos, ambulances, vehicles, than we currently have; more engineering capability; and they'll be able—they're designed to respond in half the time.

The current CSMRFs are designed to respond between 48 and 96 hours. The future DSRF will respond between—half that time, 12 and—

Senator LIEBERMAN. Very important. As we know, the speed of the response is critical.

Admiral WINNEFELD. Speed is life, absolutely. And then a key element of this is that there will be one homeland response force within each FEMA region.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Yes. So in other words, as part of the FEMA Reform Act we created—we beefed up ten regional offices for FEMA.

Admiral WINNEFELD. Yes.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Go ahead—and now we're going to complement—each of those will have a homeland response force through your operations.

Admiral WINNEFELD. Yes, sir. And that will be around 500 people, who will be able to respond very quickly within that FEMA region, or even respond to an adjacent FEMA region. They have a very rapid time line, 6 to 12 hours to get out the door.

So we're working very closely with the National Guard Bureau in pulling all of this together. It's a good news story. My Army Forces North commander has a very good relationship with his National Guard Bureau counterparts in how we're going to train, standardize, and that sort of thing.

So I think it's a good news story, frankly.

Senator LIEBERMAN. I think it's a very good news story and should give us all, in an uncertain world, an added measure of confidence.

The joint action plan relies on officers being trained in advance to serve in a dual-hat role and components of the training are provided by the Department of Homeland Security and FEMA, I know. I wanted to ask you whether you think the Department of Homeland Security component of the training to date has been what you want it to be?

Admiral WINNEFELD. Yes, sir, it has. We take these National Guardsmen who would be a dual-status commander, we put them through week-long JTF commander's course that we host in Colorado Springs, which other people can attend as well, but this is a prerequisite for these officers. Then we take them on a special 1-week training course where they come—I spend a lot of personal time with them. Then they travel around the country to visit ARNORTH, Air Forces North, and that sort of thing.

They end up here in Washington, D.C., where they get to visit with FEMA, they see the command centers, they visit with Department of Homeland Security and OSD and a number of the key players. I think at the end of the day we end up with a National Guardsman who is trained better than 99.9 percent of the Federal people who would be trained who could end up responding in a disaster here.

So I end up with a guardsman who understands his or her State, who understands how the Guard works, but also who understands how the Federal side works as well as anybody.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thank you.

My time is running out. I just want to make one point, General Fraser. I'm sorry I don't have the chance to ask you to respond. I was really struck by a point you made in your prepared statement, which was that nearly all the cocaine destined for the U.S. crosses

the Mexican-Guatemalan border. So I think there may be in the minds of a lot of people a kind of feeling that all this is coming from Mexico to the U.S., but it's obviously coming from south, and that's something that demands the cooperation of both of your commands.

Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Lieberman.

Senator Chambliss.

Senator CHAMBLISS. Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

Let me echo my appreciation to both of you for your service. General Fraser, you and I have had the opportunity to work on any number of issues from time to time. I'm very proud of your service and where you are now. Admiral Winnefeld, you continue to make Georgia Tech proud.

Admiral, an incident occurred on the border in the last day or 2 where two young Americans were apparently shot to death. I don't know whether it was random or whether you can shed some light on that. But a two-part question: Was this a random act; and second, going to the numbers that you alluded to as well as Senator McCain, is this becoming more and more common, where we're seeing 35,000 Mexicans killed over a short period of time here? It's highlighted when we have Americans killed, but can you comment on what's happening with respect to the random killings like this?

Admiral WINNEFELD. Well, first, I only learned about the two deaths at the Tijuana border this morning as well. So I'm sure law enforcement will work with our Mexican counterparts. They have a very cooperative relationship in situations like this to get to the bottom of what actually happened there. So I don't have any new information for you on what happened in the two killings in Tijuana.

I do believe it goes without saying that violence is a problem inside Mexico. They acknowledge that. They have a plan to address it. I think again everything we can do to help them in a right way that acknowledges Mexican sovereignty and is a reciprocal way will only help them get their arms around that challenge that they face, that you and Senator McCain have both pointed out.

So I think we've got a ways to go before this is solved. But again, I applaud the courage and the commitment of the Calderon government and my Mexican military counterparts in taking on that problem. It's a tough one.

Senator CHAMBLISS. The issue of border security continues to be a very hot button item with policymakers as well as our constituents all across the country. Let me first ask you whether or not in your support role to law enforcement on the border there is any asset that you don't have that you need or any increase in numbers of assets that you have that would provide you greater opportunity to be of assistance?

Admiral WINNEFELD. Sir, we have a joint task force, Joint Task Force North, who works underneath me in El Paso, that is charged with supporting our law enforcement agencies along the border as best we can within the legal limits of how a military can support law enforcement inside a democratic nation like ours.

So we provide construction support along the border, whether it be new roads or repairing roads or fences. We provide some surveil-

lance assets, including contract surveillance assets that were useful in apprehending the suspects in the Agent Terry case late last year. We also provide intelligence support, and we have to be very cautious with that to strictly adhere to the legal and policy limitations that we have.

But I've moved, for example, 14 of my intelligence specialists from JTF North into the El Paso Intelligence Center to help them benefit from some of the lessons that we've learned overseas on how you fuse different types of intelligence and go at this problem.

So we're doing what we can with the resources we have to support our law enforcement partners as best we can.

Senator CHAMBLISS. Well, to again echo what Senator McCain said, it's the last year that's our measuring stick. So when you come back next year and appear before this committee, very honestly, Admiral, we expect you to be able to tell us—while it's not your primary responsibility to secure that border, I think it's reasonable to expect us to get a favorable report from you with regard to an increase in security on that border from the standpoint of the support that you're giving.

Let me address a question to both of you regarding the valuable role of WINSEC in particularly the Mexican situation, but otherwise, too. I know that the training that we are providing at WINSEC today—and Senator Levin and I have the privilege of serving on that board—with regard to the Mexicans being able to confront the transnational criminal organizations has been very forceful and very positive at WINSEC.

I'd like for you to comment on that, and also for both of you to comment on this issue of whether or not the names of non-U.S. personnel who are attending WINSEC should be released, in light of the fact particularly with what's going on in Mexico, what kind of harm's way does it put these individuals in should their names be released to the public?

Admiral WINNEFELD. I'll go ahead and start if it's okay, sir. I managed to visit WINSEC this year. I have attended the board of governors meeting and that has been a useful experience for me to understand what that terrific institution is able to do. We're very delighted to have a Mexican deputy commandant this year, which I think is a tremendous step from the Mexicans' part, to provide that, and will benefit both of us.

Regarding your last point, I think it's very important that we not release names. I would categorically state that WINSEC has undergone a tremendous transformation in the last decade. It's a very good education for the Latin Americans and Mexicans who visit there. They emphasize human rights at every turn. And I think it would be tragic if we were to release the names of those personnel and expose them to risk inside their own countries potentially, as we have seen in many cases. In fact, in Mexico they've lost as many security personnel in the last 4 years as we have in Iraq and Afghanistan. So there is real risk for these folks and I think we should not release their names.

General FRASER. I'll echo Admiral Stavridis—Admiral Winnefeld's comments. A thousand roughly people are at WINSEC at each year. We're seeing growing demand. We're seeing growing

support for the school. It follows the curriculum that Admiral Winnefeld discussed.

I, like him, do not think we should release the names, for exactly the same reason. And I've even had—not regarding the release of names, but I've had some of my counterparts ask us to extend and increase the types of training that we have in WINSEC, they find it that valuable.

Senator CHAMBLISS. I believe you told me also that you'd even had a request for more numbers of individuals from countries to be able to attend WINSEC. That's what our partners think of the school.

General FRASER. Yes, sir, that's in fact true. I've had one of my counterparts ask that he be able to train all of his cadets and spend some—and lengthen the amount of time that they have at the school. He had a chance to attend the school when he was a young officer and he found it very valuable, and he wants to extend that to all his young officers.

Senator CHAMBLISS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Chambliss, and thank you for the work that you do relative to WINSEC. As a matter of fact, even some of the skeptics and the critics I think have gradually understood the value of that institution in terms of training, in terms of support, in terms of human rights.

So I want to particularly thank you and join with you in saying how much we opposed the release of those names and were able to get that removed in conference last year, that effort that was made on the part of the House.

Senator Udall.

Senator UDALL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Good morning, gentlemen. It's great to have you here. It's also inspirational to know the kind of partnership the two of you have crafted, given the interwoven nature of the challenges we face, both NORTHCOM and SOUTHCOM.

Admiral Winnefeld, I want to thank you as well for outlining in some great detail the relationship we have with the Mexican government, the Mexican authorities. The TCO dynamic is a dangerous one, it's a complex one. But I think it's important to underline the fact that these are criminal organizations that are bent on driving their own mission forward with no consideration for human lives and societal stability. So thank you for the good work you're doing there, and also the partnership you've crafted with the Mexican authorities. I know it's been a focus of your time.

Let me turn to the concept you've used, Admiral, the 21st century border. Could you describe that concept in a little more detail? Is it a physical structure, the 21st century border, or is it a combination of physical construction, sound policy initiatives, and other actions that might not be obvious at first glance?

Admiral WINNEFELD. I would first point out that the 21st century border concept is one of the four Beyond Merida pillars, so it's not my creation. It's an intergovernmental creation between the government of Mexico and the government of the United States, led by the State Department, which involves not only defeating and disrupting the TCOs, but building strong and resilient commu-

nities, also establishing strong institutions and the rule of law, and finally the 21st century border.

In the case of the 21st century border, I would also want to defer to my Department of Homeland Security colleagues, who really are sort of the dominant feature of that particular initiative.

I would say that it's not—the 21st century border concept is not a line in the sand. It's not a fence. It's a concept that talks about depth in terms of looking at the border beyond just the border, both into Mexico and into the United States. It's a concept that tries to preserve the freedom of licit commerce as well as the ability to intercept and interdict illicit commerce.

But I would also—I really would want to turn to my DHS colleagues to have them outline it in greater detail.

Senator UDALL. You noted, Admiral, that the air sovereignty alert mission requires careful coordination between active duty and National Guard units, and there are a whole host of partners involved, including the Canadians, FAA, and other agencies. I want to make sure you have the tools that you need for continued success. Do you have any concerns, given that the F-16 fleet is aging and there are then delays in the F-35 program? And as a follow-on, would you speak to any other resources or improvements in your existing infrastructure that are necessary to make sure the ASA mission is fully manned and supported?

Admiral WINNEFELD. I'd say first we're delighted to have one of our air sovereignty alert sites right in Denver at Buckley. They do a wonderful job up there. We have 16 alert sites inside the continental United States, all of which are manned by the Air Guard, and they do a terrific job for us. We interact with them on a day to day basis through both our continental NORAD and our eastern and western air defense sectors.

It's my sense from working closely with the Air Force that General Schwartz is determined to make sure that our air sovereignty alert needs are met. He's made that commitment, and of course it's the service's job to work through the details of how they would achieve that. SLEP- ing F-16s or what have you may be the correct answer, but I'm counting on the Afghan and they have given me good reassurance that we will have the assets that we require to conduct that mission properly. I know there's a very good, healthy discussion going on inside the Air Force and the Air Guard to make sure that happens.

Regarding the other resources, I'm pretty pleased that we're on track regarding budgetary pieces that would help me do my mission better. There are a number of capability enhancements that we've sought and have received, things like better satellite communications for our interceptors, so that you can have one down low in case there's a low flyer and one up high and still be able to communicate properly with those aircraft, and a host of other things. But we're in pretty good shape resource-wise for this mission.

Senator UDALL. If I might, let me turn to the QDR from July 2010. I think you've spoken to this, but I wanted to consider it even a little bit further. In the QDR, to quote what was stated there, the force structure recommended by the QDR "will not provide sufficient capacity to respond to a domestic catastrophe that might occur during a period of ongoing contingency operations abroad.

The role of Reserve components needs to be reviewed with an eye to ensuring that a portion of the National Guard be dedicated to homeland defense.”

Do you agree, and what changes will NORTHCOM need to pursue to address this concern?

Admiral WINNEFELD. I think the QDR was probably addressing the fact that we are transitioning some of our chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear response capability into the National Guard, much more State emphasis with the homeland response forces being produced over the next year and a half. All ten of those will be in place by the end of fiscal year 2012. So that’s principally what we’re talking about.

I would say that the National Guard is serving extremely well as an operational Reserve. I would not want to box them in too much into one mission because the very same guardsmen who can respond inside a State or can respond at the request of another State under the emergency management assistance compact in the event of a disaster, those same guardsmen have been deployed overseas, many of them several times, to Afghanistan or Iraq. It just demonstrates the terrific versatility of that force. I wouldn’t want to box them in too much into a homeland security or defense role. They’re just a wonderful, diverse partner to have in anything that we do.

Senator UDALL. I think outside of the overall Guard commander, you have the best view of the capacity of the Guard. I think you put it very, very well that the expansion of their knowledge, their skill sets, their experience, is phenomenal. You are well aware of that because, although you don’t, as you’ve told me and told the committee, you don’t own that many assets, when the emergency hits the Guard will need to be deployed under your command.

Admiral WINNEFELD. I also rely on the Guard for a number of other things, not only air sovereignty alert and to be a good partner in the event of a disaster, where we would be a supporting partner; they are my missile defense trigger-pullers. The Alaska National Guard and the Colorado National Guard perform the missile defense mission for me each and every day.

So I’ve got a tremendous reliance on them. They’re a wonderful partner and I have a vested interest in them being well taken care of.

Senator UDALL. Thank you both for your service.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Udall.

Senator Brown.

Senator BROWN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Admiral and General, thank you, obviously, for being here. It’s good to see you both again.

Admiral, as you know, we’ve come pretty far since the days of 9–11 in how we respond to natural disasters and defend our homeland. As you also know, I’m a guardsman and so I have a unique appreciation for the role of the Guard as an operational Reserve, whether it’s responding to floods, earthquakes, responding with no notice to defend our air space with F–15s or 16s.

So I just want to thank you for recognizing, obviously, the importance of the Guard on NORTHCOM’s mission. It’s important. I know that General Carter is here, the adjutant general in Massa-

chusetts, advocating on behalf of Mass guardsmen, and I know a lot of other Senators feel very strongly about the role that they play, and also the strains and stresses not only on them and their families.

So I think it's important for you to know that you have an ally and that if there's a problem we need to know about it. As the chairman referenced, is there any type of legislation or any other benefits that we need to try to help you with? So please include me in that circle if you could.

I was wondering, how many actual National Guard officers sit in your command, Admiral?

Admiral WINNEFELD. I have on any given day around 45 or 50 permanently assigned to my headquarters. But on top of that, a number of them are passing through.

Senator BROWN. TDY?

Admiral WINNEFELD. TDY, that sort of thing. So around 100 on any given day in my headquarters.

Senator BROWN. And in terms of the communications, I think I know the answer, but speaking with General McKinley, is it on a daily basis, weekly? How does that work?

Admiral WINNEFELD. I probably speak with General McKinley at least once a week, if not more often. We spend an awful lot of time together. Once I was nominated for this position, the first phone call I made was to General McKinley to express my desire to have a great partnership. We already knew each other from previous work, and that has been an excellent partnership. I think the world of the National Guard and its leadership.

Senator BROWN. I have noted that you've obviously referenced it. It's refreshing to see the role of the Guard and how it's being perceived, obviously, with the administration and obviously you in your position.

How does the Guard actually fit into NORTHCOM's training plan, if you can do it now, or we can speak off-line, whatever's easier?

Admiral WINNEFELD. I can provide you information for the record on that, but I can tell you that they are intimately integrated. We work hand in glove with the Guard supporting them. We always try to leave them at the helm, if you will, and be a good supporting partner. We're not trying to run their training for them.

We have good partnerships in exercise. We have a very important national-level exercise that's coming up in the next month or so called Ardent Sentry for us, that will examine the effects of a New Madrid earthquake fault. FEMA is involved. It's a very national-level exercise. And we'll be partnering very closely with the Guard in the process of that. So that's just one example of the many things that we do together with them.

Senator BROWN. And I found it exciting and interesting about the contingency dual status commander initiative you mentioned. Are all officers—are officers from all active and Reserve components eligible to become dual-status commanders?

Admiral WINNEFELD. Anybody theoretically can be a dual-status commander, including a Title 10 officer. Our training program is focused on the Guard because the Guard's in the States.

Senator BROWN. Where do you do it?

Admiral WINNEFELD. We do the JTF commanders course right in Colorado Springs, and then I spend a day with them in Colorado Springs personally, talking with them and hearing from them, frankly, as much as we talk to them. Then they move to San Antonio, where my Army Forces North headquarters is, and they get a good solid day understanding how that team works. Then they spend time in Washington, D.C., all around town visiting with some of the key players that would be involved in the response to a disaster.

Senator BROWN. And the DOD has modified the chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear consequence management enterprise. And when will the transition to the new enterprise be completed, and how will the new structure provide greater lifesaving capabilities?

Admiral WINNEFELD. The transition should be complete at the end of next fiscal year, so on October 1 of 2012 we should be complete with the transition. The first two homeland response forces, one in Ohio and one in Washington State, will stand up this year, and the remaining eight will stand up over the course of fiscal year 2012.

We will be complete with the transition on the Federal side to the DSRF, if you will, at the end of this year and we will stand up one other unit, called a C2CRE, which is about a thousand people, who also have some response capability, but whose intent in life is to bring in general purpose forces in the event of a large disaster that goes beyond the scope of what the current enterprise can handle.

So the transition is on track.

Senator BROWN. General Fraser, I don't want you to feel left out. I apologize. I just wanted to zero in on a couple of areas.

I want to thank you, first of all, for SOUTHCOM's really tremendous success with Haiti and Chile. It really makes me proud to be an American and see what our men and women are doing. I know the President has traveled to Brazil and Chile and El Salvador to try to forge new alliances, and I certainly encourage him in that. In fact, that's why I'm hopeful a lot of these free trade agreements will be approved sooner rather than later.

However, I'm troubled. When I was in Israel, I noticed Iran's kind of tentacles out there. I know Iran is also establishing relationships within Latin America, and I know they're looking for new allies in that region. I was wondering, can you comment on the anti-U.S. alliance in Venezuela under President Chavez and the personal relationship between Ahmedinejad and Chavez, and has this relationship enhanced Iran's influence in Bolivia and Nicaragua and Ecuador?

General FRASER. Thanks, Senator. There is a close relationship between President Chavez and President Ahmedinejad. President Chavez has visited 9 times in the 12 years that he's been President. I still see it primarily on a diplomatic and a commercial level, those relationships. Although there is growing opportunities for military-to- military connections, we haven't seen it growing to the same extent. Iran has doubled almost the number of embassies they have within the region, so they're not just focused in Venezuela and Bolivia, those other countries.

And they've also built cultural centers in 17 different countries throughout the region. So they are continuing to try and gain an understanding within Latin America, of Latin Americans, of Iran and form those connections.

My concern as I look at it is the fact that there are flights between Iran and Venezuela on a weekly basis. Visas are not required for entrance into Venezuela or Bolivia or Nicaragua. So we don't have a lot of visibility in who's visiting and who isn't, and that's really where I see the concerns.

I don't have connections with those organizations that Iran has supported in other parts of the world, Hezbollah, but we're still skeptical and watching that on a routine basis.

Senator BROWN. My time is up. I want to just wrap it up. Can I have one more small question, Mr. Chairman?

Chairman LEVIN. Yes.

Senator BROWN. Thank you.

Currently, does SOUTHCOM have the necessary amount and appropriate mixture of ISR resources required to successfully combat illicit trafficking operations, in your opinion?

General FRASER. Senator, let me be honest. Everybody combatant commander would like more.

Senator BROWN. Right.

General FRASER. Within the current capabilities and capacities and priorities we have, I'm comfortable with the assets we have. But we're also exploring ways that we can gain information through a lot of other information sources that are throughout the region, meaning social networking, a lot of different areas that we're trying to see what the value and what the capabilities are, because ISR is only one piece of where we can gain information and get awareness. We have a lot of effort in that area.

Senator BROWN. Well, thank you both.

Mr. Chairman, thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Brown.

Senator Reed.

Senator REED. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Gentlemen, thank you for your service and the service of your families and servicemen and women. Thank you very much.

Admiral, you've talked a lot about Mexico today. It's a significant and violent situation. These transnational criminal organizations are operating openly. One of the disturbing facts is not just the fatalities, but also the increasing sophistication of their weapons, and not just firearms, but communications, night vision devices and others.

Where are most of these weapons coming from?

Admiral WINNEFELD. They come from a variety of places. To be sure, there are a number of weapons that are flowing south across our border, and it's a grave concern to the Mexicans and of course it is for us as well. By the same token, there are also weapons coming into Mexico from other parts of Latin America. You can sort of—if you see an AK-47, it could come from either place. But there are certain types of weapons that might come from south of Mexico.

So there are a number of other sophisticated weapons. The night vision goggles, I'm not really sure where they come from. But you're absolutely correct, they are getting more and more sophisti-

cated. They're using heavily armored vehicles that are more and more resistant to the types of weapons that the Mexicans are using. They are using fully submersible submarines to move cocaine from South America and to Central America. So it is an increasing challenge to be sure.

Senator REED. And we are taking efforts on our side of the border to try to disrupt this trade? General Fraser can respond to the efforts that are being taken in other countries, neighboring countries.

Admiral WINNEFELD. Yes, sir. I can't speak for the Department of Justice and ATF and a number of other organizations that are trying to do the best we can to interdict the flow of weapons going south, but there is a concerted effort. It's a big challenge, though.

Senator REED. When you say you can't speak for them, is there some type of statutory bar for collaboration?

Admiral WINNEFELD. No, sir. It's just that most of the support that we give to the law enforcement agencies is fairly basic in terms of construction, intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance, that sort of thing. In terms of the sort of deep investigatory type of work that a law enforcement agent would do in order to interdict weapons, it's really not in our area of expertise.

Senator REED. General Fraser, your comments on the flow from other neighboring countries into Mexico of weapons?

General FRASER. Yes, Senator. The information I have is a lot of almost—well, over 50 percent of the military-type weapons that are flowing throughout the region have a large source within Central American stockpiles, if you will, left over from wars and conflicts in the past. Department of Justice, ATF, has a lot of focused efforts there working to work stockpile controls as well as military efforts to work the same issues. But there is a lot of funding available with these transnational criminal organizations, so corruptions, slack processes, are still a problem, and we're fighting those on every level.

Senator REED. Let me ask a question of both of you in the context of the strategic implications. By 2014 there will be a Panama Canal that is able to accommodate much larger ships. We're told by the Department of the Navy that by 2020 at least 1 month a year the Northwest Passage will be open to commercial traffic, which is your responsibility, NORTHCOM.

Are you beginning to think in terms of this significant change in strategic at least maritime routes in terms of your strategy and our policy, General Fraser?

General FRASER. We are looking at that. We conduct annual exercises in support of the government of Panama. We call it "Panamax." It also involves 18 other countries; it varies, 18 to 20. We conduct that on an annual basis, as well as the government itself takes advantage of the opportunity and conducts its own internal exercise focused on the defense of the Panama Canal. So they have a very significant effort working along those lines.

So in conjunction with Northern Command, it is an area that we are looking at. But a lot of our focus right now continues to be on the counter-transnational criminal operations.

Senator REED. Admiral, in terms of the opening up, which was something 10, 20 years ago was beyond—I mean, no one could

credibly see this coming—what are you doing to prepare for this in terms of—

Admiral WINNEFELD. Of my eight different focus areas that I have in the command, the Arctic is one of them that we are working on very hard. I'm sort of calling this the year of the Arctic around the headquarters. We're working very closely with a lot of our partners, to include our Canadian partners, to put together what we call a commander's estimate for the Arctic that will lay out where we see the challenges, what's the environment like, and how would we organize our thinking to take on the potential for the Arctic opening up.

I'm blessed to have the Canadians in my headquarters that I have, because they not only bring considerable expertise on the Arctic to bear on this work that we're doing, the intellectual work we're doing, but it also demonstrates transparency to Canada that I have Canadians helping me with this problem, which forges a very good partnership between us.

So we are looking very closely. We believe we're going to sort of organize ourselves around defense, security, and safety. But I think that most of our attention will probably be applied in reverse order. As the Arctic opens up more and more, there's going to be more human activity up there, more possibilities for search and rescue requirement or an environmental disaster that we may be the only people around, along with our Canadian partners and the Coast Guard, who can assist in something like that.

So we're examining this very, very closely and trying to stay ahead of it.

Senator REED. This is also an opportunity for cooperation or confrontation with other powers in the region, which I presume would be the Russians. Who else are you sort of beginning to reach out or will have some type of geographic interest in the area?

Admiral WINNEFELD. Well, of course there are eight Arctic—recognized Arctic nations, Russia being one of them. We are cautiously optimistic that the eight nations together will manage to prevent the militarization of the Arctic, but we're very vigilant for that. We obviously don't want to unintentionally cause it by getting up there with too much too fast.

But I think the key in the Arctic is open partnerships among the Arctic nations. There are other non-Arctic nations who are expressing an interest up there, namely China, that we are watching very closely as well.

Senator REED. Thank you very much. My time has expired. Thank you, gentlemen.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Reed.

Senator Ayotte.

Senator AYOTTE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Admiral, General, thank you so much for your service to our country, and please give my gratitude to all of those who serve beneath you for the sacrifices that they're making to keep us safe.

I wanted to ask you about, General Fraser, you said in your written testimony that members of violent extremist organizations from the Middle East remain active in Latin American and the Caribbean and constitute a potential threat. Could you provide more detail regarding the fundraising activities of Islamist extremist

groups in Central and South America, and an estimate, if you were able to give one, of how much money they're raising, how's it being raised, and where are they then funneling those funds to?

General FRASER. Thank you very much, Senator. There are those organizations resident, not as much in Central America. They're more in South America. Most of their funding is raised through illicit activity, and these are organizations and members who have been around for a number of years, decades, if you will, resident in those areas.

The amount of how much they raise I don't have a good estimate of, because it transfers back and forth to parent organizations in the Middle East in a variety of methods. So I can't get a very clear estimate. Even then, as it goes back to locations within the Middle East I can't tell you exactly where it is going. But we have again assessments that it is going into parent organizations. That's my concern right now. We haven't seen a change in that over the last 2 to 5 years, of where their activity is focused.

Senator AYOTTE. Do you have any thoughts for us on how we could better assist what you're trying to do, obviously not just your command, but multiple other agencies, in addressing the fund-raising activities that go to terrorist groups? Is there any other tools that you need in your toolbox that we could help you with?

General FRASER. Well, Senator, I think it is, as we look across the region, this is a whole of government effort. It is support to those Department of State programs that really focus on law enforcement activities, on the judicial areas, and supporting those opportunities, money-laundering. There has been a significant effort focused on money-laundering through the Department of State.

The interagency efforts is the best focus that I have within that to really addressing these issues.

Senator AYOTTE. How much are these Islamic terrorist groups having success recruiting in the area of Latin America? Is this a fertile recruiting ground for members of those organizations to commit terrorist acts?

General FRASER. There are individuals who are attempting to recruit in various locations. We have seen fairly low numbers of results of any ability to radicalize elements. So it's an area that we continue to watch and monitor, but we haven't seen any big change in their ability to really improve and recruit activists within their organizations within Latin America.

Senator AYOTTE. That's actually very encouraging. Thank you.

Admiral, as you know, the GAO recently published a report on the northern border. The report highlights that in fiscal year 2010 only 32 of the nearly 4,000 northern border miles had reached an acceptable level of security. I realize that we've been talking about in this committee very importantly some of the incredibly serious problems along our southern border that require immediate attention and resources, and I certainly fully support those efforts to secure our southern border.

But as we look at our northern border, I'm concerned Al-Qaeda, terrorist organizations, they're going to look at wherever they can come into our country, and wanted to know from you how does NORTHCOM's support for the Department of Homeland Security in securing our northern border—can you update us on efforts to

better coordinate with civilian agencies and our Canadian partners at that border?

Admiral WINNEFELD. First, of course, the Department of Homeland Security will be in the lead, as you pointed out, on this. A 4,000-mile border is a tremendous challenge, as you well understand. It's a longer border than we have on the southern border.

We have provided support in the past to our DHS partners. Since 2008 it averages roughly a couple of events per year that are major events, a month-long surveillance support mission or what have you. We have two more of those schedule this year. So we'll execute those.

We also have a number of other initiatives that we work with our partners in terms of some training initiatives that we work with the law enforcement folks. But it is an economy of force effort, to be sure.

I would candidly point out that in the years since 2008 that we've been doing this DOD efforts have assisted in interdicting 181 pounds of marijuana. That's what a single ultralight coming across the southern border in one night will drop and depart and head back into Mexico. So we are using about 20 percent, I believe, of our JTF-North resources along the southern border to support our partners, and we think we have that about right. But it is, as you point out, a very difficult challenge to secure 4,000 miles of border.

Working with Canada, I think the peripheral security initiative that we have ongoing within the governments of Canada and the United States is a positive move ahead and if it's able to improve transparency between the two nations in terms of intelligence regarding potential terrorist threats, I think that will be one of the most important things that we can do in this effort.

Senator AYOTTE. Thank you both very much for your testimony. I appreciate it.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Ayotte.

Senator HAGAN.

Senator HAGAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, both of you, for being here today and obviously your service to our country. It's very appreciated.

As chair of the Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities, I believe it's critically important to counter the transnational criminal organizations and their illicit trafficking activities. Central to that is building the effective partnership capacity with key regional governments and the security establishments to prevent them from operating in permissive environments.

General Fraser, in your prepared statement you indicated that Central America has become the preferred transit zone for this criminal organization in pursuit of their illicit activities and the limited capabilities of Central American states have allowed the Mexican transnational criminal organization to establish points of entry for illegal drugs coming in from South America, and then the Mexico-Guatemala-Belize border area is particularly vulnerable.

I understand that SOUTHCOM is working with NORTHCOM and the interagency to develop a regional operation capability among the Nations. I understand that an estimated \$100 billion per year in illicit goods—drugs, weapons, counterfeit products—and then an estimated 100,000 humans are trafficked through the po-

rous borders throughout the region; and also that nearly all the cocaine destined for U.S. crosses the Guatemala-Mexico border.

With that background, what types of resources will this regional operations capability require and what will the objectives be?

General FRASER. Thank you, Senator. It is a complex issue, as you mentioned. Central America has become a preferred pathway for illicit activity, if you will, coming in and out of the United States. From a cocaine standpoint, still 90 percent of the cocaine is grown in the northern part of South America and it transits up through various stops into Central America, and then there is bulk cash and weapons and other activity that flows south.

We are working very closely in an interagency process within the Federal Government to support the governments within Central America. If you look in the northern part of Central America, the presidents of Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras are meeting on a regular basis. Their ministers of defense and ministers of security are doing the same thing, to build their own capacity across their borders.

As you mentioned, along with Admiral Winnefeld we are working with our counterparts in Mexico, Guatemala, Belize to work the issue along their common border. A lot of the focus of the effort is going to be in other parts of our government. It is law enforcement focused, it is judiciary, it is working with disadvantaged youth to help them. It is Agency for International Development.

We have a role to play in that. A lot of our area is focused in the maritime and air environment to try and help support efforts all throughout Central America to give them the capacity and support their capacity to intercept those vessels that transit drugs and illicit activity as well as the airborne capacity. But that's in very close coordination with the Department of State and all interagency efforts. That is a growing capability. As I mentioned in my opening remarks, with the President's initiative, with the Central American regional security initiative, and if I go into the Caribbean the Caribbean Basin security initiative, in conjunction with what we're doing in Mexico with the Beyond Merida and what Colombia is doing, it is a regional effort and it needs to remain that way. But we've got a lot of work to do.

Senator HAGAN. Admiral Winnefeld?

Admiral WINNEFELD. Again, I would reiterate that General Fraser and I work closely together. We see signs, good signs, I think, of cooperation among Belize, Guatemala, and Mexico, and of course we encourage that. We would like to help them in any way we can, while respecting their sovereignty.

In the case of Mexico, they have a very clear understanding of their southern border region. It's a very complex place, much more complex than I ever anticipated before I came into the job. Their current focus right now is in the northeast because that's where the most violence is occurring, it's where the Zetas and the Sinaloa and the Gulf cartels and the like are fighting over turf, and that's where most of the violence is occurring. The last thing they want to do is open up another front in the south before they're able to get their arms around the challenges in the northeast.

We're in lockstep with them on that philosophy. We're ready to help in any way that we can within the resources and authorities that we have.

Senator HAGAN. General Fraser, I think you mentioned—I'd love to hear both of your comments about the submersibles. Where is it coming from? Where is that starting and where is it ending up in the U.S.

General FRASER. We have seen an evolution of maritime transit over the last decade. There's still a large portion of it, 40 to 50 percent, that transits through go-fast vessels along the coast of Central America, and that's where it enters Central America.

In the last decade, we saw an increase in what we call semi-submersibles, 100-foot long vessels that could carry 10 tons of cocaine, that travel 1,000 to 1500 miles. We saw an increase and it kind of peaked in 2007, and we've seen a decline of those vessels, and now an increase in, as Senator McCain mentioned, fully submersible vessels, vessels that can submerge on a shallow level, very difficult to detect, about the same level.

They transit primarily from the west coast of Ecuador, Colombia, up through the Pacific, in some cases around the Galapagos, back. 2 days ago we just captured or we stopped a semi-submersible about 300 miles to the east of the Galapagos as it was transitting. Then they go north to along the southern border of Guatemala or Mexico.

So it's an increasing problem, made in the jungles of western Colombia and Ecuador. As an idea of why they're using them, it costs in our estimate 3 to \$4 million to produce, but one transit will equate to about 70 to \$80 million of return on that one transit.

Senator HAGAN. My time has expired. Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much.

Senator Cornyn is next.

Senator CORNYN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Admiral, General, thank you for being here and for your service. I think it's appropriate that you be here together because, as we've seen, there's a continuum of concern from our northern borders all the way into South America. I want to talk to you a little bit about that.

Admiral, thanks for meeting with me recently to go over some specific concerns I had, and shared by others, about what's happening in Mexico and our efforts to help President Calderon and the government there. As you said, respecting their sovereignty, but being there to help as an ally and friend and trading partner, as much as they confront this great challenge.

General, as much attention as I pay as a Texan to things happening south, I was frankly very surprised to hear part of your testimony that the northern triangle formed by Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras is possibly the most violent place on Earth. That came as a little bit of a surprise to me, but I guess again reiterating how everything's connected to everything else. We know that things that can flow north, which is where the money is and where these transnational criminal organizations are committed to doing everything they can to maximizing their profits by selling anything that has a market value, that all of this is worthy of our attention and certainly your best efforts to try to help us combat.

I want to—since you, General, are in charge of the JIATF, the Joint Interagency Task Force South, I have actually had some conversations with the Admiral about using that model in combatting the cartels and the drug trafficking in Mexico or along the border. Of course, Admiral, you pointed out that it's important to have civilian lead in any JIATF-type model that was created in El Paso or thereabouts.

But I wonder, first, General, would you talk just briefly about what you see the benefits of the JIATF model are? Then I'd like, Admiral, for you to follow up with that and talk about what we can learn from that model in SOUTHCOM that might be appropriate to help add additional resources and capabilities in fighting the cartels and the drugs coming into the United States.

General FRASER. Thank you, Senator. Our focus within Joint Interagency Task Force South is very focused. It's a portion of the traffic route and the disruption of that as they transit to the north. It's very focused in detecting and monitoring that traffic as it goes through the maritime and air environments of the Caribbean and the eastern Pacific, so a very defined mission in support of our inter-agency goals.

It's become a very, very effective organization because it includes 17 different agencies, Federal agencies: law enforcement, service organizations, as well as national intelligence organizations, all working, all bringing their capacities and authorities together, and then they coordinate to conduct their mission. They get intelligence information on what vessels or aircraft to look at from law enforcement and local countries. Then they detect and monitor it with both military and law enforcement capability, and then hand that vessel off to either a domestic capability within a Central American country or to an international vessel, who then detains those operators and then moves them to prosecution within the United States or domestically.

It's become a very effective organization and a great model. In fact, it has representatives from countries and law enforcement throughout Latin America, but also Europe, because we see a connection across the Atlantic as well.

Senator CORNYN. Admiral, what could we learn from what's happening in SOUTHCOM to enhance capabilities for law enforcement and our Federal agencies?

Admiral WINNEFELD. First of all, I would say JIATF- South is a very good model. It may not be a perfect model for what you would do inside the homeland, because there are different legal requirements inside our own country, as opposed to outside.

Senator CORNYN. Hence the point you made about the importance of a civilian lead?

Admiral WINNEFELD. Exactly. And of course, we would be very happy to have a civilian lead of an organization like that. The last person who should lead something inside the homeland that has to do with law enforcement is DOD.

I believe that we're migrating slowly in that direction. The El Paso Intelligence Center is an organization that continues to evolve positively, in a positive direction. There's the newly created Border Intelligence Fusion Section, or BIFS, down with the EPIC, that is starting to do some good work.

As I mentioned earlier, we have put 14 of our own international people from JTF–North inside of the Border Intelligence Fusion Section. I think they’re doing some good work down there. So we are migrating in that direction. I would characterize it as sort of adults will act their way into a new way of thinking before they’ll think their way into a new way of acting, and I think that’s exactly what’s happening down there.

The thing I would want to express is that the individual agencies, law enforcement agencies associated with it, each have their own genuine concerns about what would happen if they were drawn together in one of these entities, that I think they can work their way through over time.

So I support it. I think it’s a potential concept that can do good. But we’re sort of migrating in that direction.

Senator CORNYN. Well, thank you very much, both of you. I am very concerned that, notwithstanding the efforts that we’ve tried in the United States to help our Mexican allies with the Mereda Initiative, that more needs to be done. We need to find other creative ways to adapt to the threat and to provide the resources.

I think you said, Admiral, you said the military has the resources, civil law enforcement should take the lead, but we ought to avail ourselves of the resources, the operational capacity that the military has to try to maximize our impact.

Let me ask you one other question about money. We know that when the drugs come north and are sold there’s a challenge of getting the money back to the seller, the original seller, and that raises questions about money- laundering, bulk cash transfers, and the like. What other resources can the United States Government apply to help you and our Federal agencies interdict cash that’s heading south? It strikes me that that’s got to be one of the legs of the stool that’s perhaps the most vulnerable.

General FRASER. Senator, we are watching the illicit traffic as it comes south, and that’s why we’re focused on illicit trafficking, not just drug trafficking. It doesn’t matter whether it’s going north or south; if it’s illicit activity, we’re going to work with our law enforcement partners to stop that.

We’re seeing an increase in bulk cash coming south. But there has been a lot of interagency effort. And I’m not qualified to do that, to address the money-laundering issues. We’re also working with our Department of Justice, Department of Commerce counterparts, Department of Treasury, to focus on the financial tracks and use that as opportunities to help us conduct our efforts as well. We’re using all means throughout the interagency on a regional basis to address the issue you were talking about.

Admiral WINNEFELD. I would say a couple of things, sir. First, the El Paso Intelligence Center is actually doing some pretty good, increasingly improved work in interdicting cash coming south. I was just down there a few weeks ago and they briefed me on one of the operations that they had that managed to interdict some cash coming south in a pickup truck that had been carefully sewn into the seats. It’s almost like smuggling drugs. They have to be as careful with that as they do with the drugs.

I also would say that the Office of the Secretary of Defense has provided us with financial resources to allow us to stand up a six-

person cell inside my headquarters that's oriented to countering illicit financing, the traffic of cash. The natural bureaucratic and human tendency is to let that operate in a stovepipe and we're going to resist that. We've really pushed these people out—we don't have all six of them yet, but we have I think three or four of them. We're pushing them out to work with our interagency partners, Department of Treasury, ATF, and the like, to try to make the sum greater than the whole—greater than the parts. And I think that that's a nascent effort that will see some progress as time goes on.

But it's a very difficult problem. We're not moving money electronically here. We're moving it physically, and that's a very hard thing to interdict.

Senator CORNYN. Well, Mr. Chairman, if I may. We've put a lot of assets on things heading north, as we should, and I think we need to continue to expand our efforts to secure our border. But obviously this is a vulnerability heading south and there's not a similar effort being made there. You don't have the resources. But we need to try to come up with the right answers and resources you need in order to deal with that critical element in drug trafficking, which is to cut off the cash.

Thank you very much.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Cornyn.

Senator Blumenthal.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to focus on an area first with you, General, if I may, and I want to join in thanking both of you and the men and women under your command for your service and sacrifice to our Nation. Focus on an area that I think is very important, both to the Southern Command and to others, particularly the Middle East, where military leadership has proved to be so important, military leadership in other countries, and particularly the leadership of the military of those countries in respecting human rights and values that you have made such a central part of your concern, and I want to thank and commend you for recognizing the importance of those values.

I understand that SOUTHCOM has a unique human rights unit dedicated to addressing these issues in military training and cooperation with our allies in Latin America. I'd like to learn more about how this office was established and what you believe can be done to replicate its activities and success in other commands, if you would address that, that issue, General?

General FRASER. Thank you, Senator. The office has been around for a number of years. It was started in the 1990s as a recognition of the issues and the importance of human rights and the need to address the concern. It has grown and focused over that time frame. It established a human rights initiative. There are ten member nations who now support that effort.

We conduct training with our partners throughout the region. It is a focus of all our visitors. All our people have to be trained in human rights awareness before they travel into the region, so that they support it.

But our military's partners within the region also understand it. There has been I think a real transformation over the last 20 years, at least from my standpoint. They understand their role in

a democratic and a civilian-led government. They understand their authorities. They understand the importance of human rights. I hear it discussed routinely throughout.

As we look into other commands, all the combatant commands are focused in this same area. I don't know that the others have a specific office. Ours is a resource for them with what we're doing to support human rights initiatives, and it will continue to be an ongoing focus for us.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. I wonder if you could describe maybe in more specifics how the relationships with other commands, that is commands in other countries in Latin America, fosters the value for human rights? Is it the personal interaction? Is it an institutional interchange?

I know there's a very conscious policy on your part, which again is I think extraordinarily important for this Nation, as well as those nations.

General FRASER. It's on multiple levels I would say, Senator. It is at the senior level, where it's discussed. It's at the individual level. It's in the conduct of our men and women as they go down, and that's why the importance of briefing them before they go down on their focus and their conduct, as they also represent the United States throughout the region.

It's in conferences that we hold. But we've had a very deliberate effort in focus with Colombia, in their fight over the last 10 years. They are an important counterpart with us in espousing the role and the importance of human rights in all the forums in which I talk about it, and I have connections—I hear them talking about it more than a lot of other people.

Now, we also work with human rights nongovernmental organizations and have discussions with them here in Washington, here in the United States, but also throughout the region. We look for opportunities to bring those partners together. So it's little efforts on a continuous basis that I think are making the difference.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. And I might just say—

Admiral WINNEFELD. May I?

Senator BLUMENTHAL. I'm sorry, Admiral.

Admiral WINNEFELD. I was going to ask, within your time, sir, if I could answer also?

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Absolutely.

Admiral WINNEFELD. The Mexican partners that I have are up against a very sophisticated information adversary, who's very skilled at taking almost any incident and turning it into an alleged human rights violation. So they're very cautious about that. I would tell you that they really want to get this right, and they have an insatiable appetite for the types of subject matter expert exchanges that we have with them, where we have to remember that we don't have a perfect record, either. And we're eager to share with them our experiences and they're very eager to hear them. They really want to get this right and they're on a good track in Mexico.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. That is a very encouraging part of this story and, unfortunately, perhaps less told or untold. I want to thank you for bringing it to our attention and for pursuing it so aggressively and vigorously, because I think it's very important to the

future of our Nation as well as their nations that we support those democratic values and human rights.

I want to also thank you for supporting our National Guard and our Reserves, which in Connecticut are very important to much of what we do. Many of our citizens depend on them and they have a very distinguished record of service to our Nation in Iraq and other parts of the globe, as well as in Connecticut. So I think your emphasis, Admiral, on that Reserve and National Guard component and on clarifying the lines of command I think is very important.

I'd like to ask you, because you refer to it in your testimony, about the consequences of failing to fund the fiscal 2012 budget that the President's proposed, what impact you would see that potential failure as having on their capability and on the relationships to the active service?

Admiral WINNEFELD. I would want to defer to the National Guard Bureau probably to give you a more robust answer to the impact of budgetary issues on their capability. I think there's a good news story in there over the last few years, as I think Secretary Gates has pointed out, that the Guard has—its equipment status has steadily increased, I think very well. Some of that has to do with the fact that they've done overseas contingency operations. But I think it was very much the right thing to do.

In terms of specifics in the 2012 budget regarding the Guard, I would want to have to—want to get back to you for the record on that, sir.

[The information referred to follows:]

[COMMITTEE INSERT]

Senator BLUMENTHAL. One more quick question, if I might, Mr. Chairman.

I have been told, General Fraser, about the relationship between Argentina and Iran concerning state-sponsored—the state-sponsored terrorist attack on their Jewish community center that I believe occurred back in 1994, as to some quid pro quo. You may be more familiar with the facts than I, involving Argentina's agreement not to pursue an investigation in return for Iran's economic benefits to Argentina. I wonder if you could comment on those reports?

General FRASER. Senator, I don't have a whole lot more information on that than you do. I know that there are discussions that are ongoing between the government of Iran and the government of Argentina. Where and why those are taking place, I don't have any other insight specifically on that. But it is a development that we're watching.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. If you have any additional information, I would appreciate having it.

General FRASER. We'll provide that.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Blumenthal.

Why don't we just push that one step further and ask you if you would take the initiative to look into that and provide the com-

mittee any additional information that Senator Blumenthal has pointed to.

General FRASER. I will do that, Mr. Chairman.
[The information referred to follows:]

[COMMITTEE INSERT]

Chairman LEVIN. It's an important subject.
Senator McCaskill.

Senator MCCASKILL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Let me start, Admiral Winnefeld, by telling you I know that you're in great hands because your deputy commander for the Northern Command is a Missourian, Lieutenant General Frank Grass of the Missouri National Guard. So I want to point that out.

I assume that you are participating in the National-level exercise concerning the New Madrid fault that will be occurring later in May. Obviously, with earthquakes on the minds of everyone in the world after what happened in Japan, clearly that's something that's very important where I come from, is national-level exercises to deal with a potential earthquake which, frankly, was the most serious earthquake we've ever had in the United States, was the New Madrid fault. So I thank you for that.

Let me start quickly with both of you. The Secretary of Defense has asked the branches of the military to look at \$100 billion in cuts through the efficiencies program. Can both of you briefly give me what your top-line cuts are that you've been able to identify for the Secretary of Defense in your commands?

General FRASER. Thanks, Senator. Ours were, because we're a level of effort command, so ours were pretty straightforward. We looked at some conference costs and how many conferences and what we were doing. We looked at some TDY expenses, what we were doing there. And then we took some small efforts, if you will, into some other areas.

So it was really on a fairly small basis, if you will, about \$20 million is what we worked through that effort. But we also got, as we looked through the entire focus, we also got some support and improved some capacity as we look at continuing to support our over-the-horizon radar, as we looked at support for intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance capacity we have. So it was a give and take, if you will, throughout that.

Senator MCCASKILL. Did you take more than you gave?

General FRASER. Ma'am, overall I think we did.

Senator MCCASKILL. Okay. If you could get those numbers for us specifically, that would be helpful.

General FRASER. Yes, ma'am. We'll provide them.

[The information referred to follows:]

[COMMITTEE INSERT]

Senator MCCASKILL. Admiral?

Admiral WINNEFELD. I'd also like to provide the numbers for the record. But I can say that as I stepped in as the new commander 10 months ago I felt, as any new commander would, a responsibility to look across the organization to see if there were ways we could become more efficient. This sort of coincided with the initia-

tive that came out later, late last summer, to do this among the cocoms.

Of course, the services are taking the lion's share of the effort in finding the savings. But we were tasked to do it as well. We have come up with I think it's numbering in the 60s of people that we have determined we can probably live without and transition those billets into other types of organizations. So I think 40 of those are military personnel who will be absorbed back into the services. They won't lose their jobs, but I just will not have them in the headquarters any more. The same thing on the civilian side.

So we're working very hard to become more efficient. We know we have to be good stewards of taxpayer dollars. Even though our numbers are small compared to the services, we need to do our part.

Senator MCCASKILL. I think that this exercise has been helpful. I'm not convinced that all of the \$100 billion that's been identified all needs to go back in, but I know that the \$78 billion that the Secretary of Defense identified at the Pentagon is something that we can I think work towards cutting.

But I do think that there is—I am a big believer in some of the things that the Secretary of Defense said about brass creep, about making a flatter organization, about taking a different attitude about how many people we have where and are they all essential, have we puffed up, so to speak, puffed up, so to speak, some of our tasks.

Let me go to drugs, fighting drugs. We had a hearing in my subcommittee on contracting in 2009 and it was revealed that over a 4-year period the Department of State and Defense spent over \$1.1 billion on contracts to U.S. businesses conducting counternarcotics activities in Colombia alone. We are trying to get additional information on this contract spending. It didn't appear at that hearing that there was a good handle on performance measures, what was actually going on. Frankly, the same company—a lot of the same companies are resurfacing with very big contracts in Afghanistan.

If you look at overall the amount of money that we've spent on counternarcotics funding, it's ranged in the last couple of years and for the budget next year between \$3 billion and \$2.6 billion. That's combining the State Department and the Defense Department. Now, I don't even have in those numbers what we're doing at Justice and DEA and so forth.

Could I get comments from you? Are you comfortable that if we did a really aggressive hearing and scrub at what we're spending with private contractors that the American taxpayers would be pleased?

General FRASER. Senator McCaskill, from my standpoint, yes, ma'am. As you have looked into this, we have looked into it very deliberately also, for all the right reasons. We continue to focus on that. A lot of the support that we provide to Colombia and we provide with other parts of our counternarcotics effort are contracted focused, and we have a contracting center of excellence that really focuses on this effort and makes sure that we have accountability for those efforts and activities and that we're getting value for our dollar. So we are very focused on this, and I'm happy to come have a discussion at a more detailed level with you.

Senator McCASKILL. It's confusing to me. Do you feel it's clear in your mind the different functions between State, AID, Defense, and DEA? Do you think that everybody knows exactly what the other guy's job is in regards to this effort?

General FRASER. Senator, within Colombia specifically there is very, very—daily coordination between all those organizations within the embassy country team. There's very clear understanding of what each is doing and why they're doing it and how it supports one another's efforts. So I'm very comfortable in their focus and I'm very comfortable in their coordination to do this.

I see that throughout the rest of government as we focus this. We do have a very clear understanding within our country teams and within our organization as well. We have representatives from AID within our staff. We have representatives from Federal law enforcement within our staff. We coordinate those on a very routine basis.

Senator McCASKILL. Well, I wish I were as confident as you are that everyone knows what everyone's job is and there's no—part of the problem is, of course, is we've gone back and forth between is this a State function, is this a DOD function. We've seen that with training of police. We've seen that with trying to use contracts differences versus what's going on in South America.

I'm going to continue to drill down in this area and will look forward to both of your cooperation, because my sense is that there's money to be saved there and there's efficiencies that can still be gained in terms of how we are mounting this effort, the overlap and the lack of consistency as to who's in charge and why.

I appreciate both of you and all the people under your command and thank everyone for their service to our Nation.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator McCaskill.

Let me just have a few more questions. We'll start a second round.

General, a number of questions have been asked about these semi and fully submersible vessels that are tracked, operating out of I guess Central and South America. When they are detected and monitored and when it looks as though they're going to land or deliver their cargo to some other ship, is that information then turned over to the Coast Guard? Is that the way it works?

General FRASER. Yes, sir. It is an interagency group that does that. That is Joint Interagency Task Force South. So the Coast Guard is a part of that, as well as the service organizations, as well as law enforcement. That information, if it's a host nation or a domestic capability from one of our partner nations who can intercept, that information is provided directly to their command centers and then they work to intercept and detain the vessel.

So it depends on whether it's in international waters or territorial waters on who's contacted and how the information is passed. But it is law enforcement that's responsible for detaining and then prosecuting those individuals.

Chairman LEVIN. When it's turned over—are there many cases where that information is turned over to the Coast Guard?

General FRASER. On a routine basis.

Chairman LEVIN. It happens all the time?

General FRASER. Yes, sir, that happens on a daily basis.

Chairman LEVIN. What percentage of the cases would you say that when we're tracking one of those vessels that there's an arrest? Most, a few?

General FRASER. Senator, I don't have a specific number. I will give you that for the record.

[The information referred to follows:]

[COMMITTEE INSERT]

Chairman LEVIN. Just with our Coast Guard.

General FRASER. Yes, sir.

Chairman LEVIN. Okay.

We have cooperation with Cubans on matters of mutual interest, particularly going after narcotics; is that correct?

General FRASER. Yes, sir. There is coordination between U.S. Coast Guard and the border patrol from Cuba.

Chairman LEVIN. The Cubans I gather are cooperative in terms of trying to get the narcotic traffickers; is that accurate?

General FRASER. Senator, I don't know what their efforts are within Cuba. But the coordination—when there is a transit that is leaving Cuba towards the United States, there is coordination with a U.S. Coast Guard representative who is resident within the U.S. interest section in Havana. That information is exchanged.

Chairman LEVIN. As far as you know, is that a cooperative relationship?

General FRASER. Yes, sir, it is a cooperative relationship.

Chairman LEVIN. Relative to SOUTHCOM's requirement for U.S. Special Operations Forces, is the requirement being met?

General FRASER. Senator, yes, it is being met.

Chairman LEVIN. Okay. General, you've indicated that there's a big focus in Colombia on espousing human rights. I want to talk to you about a problem that we have down there in terms of the killing of union officials and bringing the killers to justice, because the record's not very good. Can you—is that part of the human rights effort that we work with the Colombians about?

General FRASER. Senator, we have worked very diligently and the Colombians continue to do that. They have a human rights education process within their own organization, talking from a military standpoint. There was an incident about 6 months ago where there was killing of some young individuals by some soldiers. The Colombian army, the Colombian military, the Colombian minister of defense, attacked that issue very deliberately and arrested and continues that prosecution.

We have worked with the Colombians on establishing rules of engagement, rules for the use of force, as they work throughout. So I see a continued effort to focus on it. But much like we, they don't have a perfect record, and we don't have a perfect record as you look at some of these issues. But their focus on it continues and they continue to make progress.

Chairman LEVIN. Do you know what their record is in terms of bringing to justice the murderers of union officials? Do you know what their record is?

General FRASER. I don't have that, no, sir.

Chairman LEVIN. Admiral, relative to Cyber Command, you said in your prepared statement that you're closely examining the role of NORTHCOM in response to—that they would play in response to a cyber attack, in order to synchronize our efforts with the STRATCOM and the Cyber Command; and that you view your role as assisting the lead Federal agency in mitigating the physical effects of such an event, while staying close to our partners working in the cyber domain.

What would NORTHCOM do beyond what the Cyber Command would do in the event of a cyber attack?

Admiral WINNEFELD. I think it depends, obviously, on the nature of the attack. If it were an attack, for instance, that took down a significant portion of the electrical grid and if it took that grid down for an extended period of time, we would start to see some pretty serious physical effects inside the country. When you can't pump gas out of a gas station, the transportation network starts to break down. When you can't pump fresh water, that sort of thing starts to happen.

So we would probably find ourselves in some fairly basic physical roles of transportation and support, just using the capacities that we have as a military applied to a serious problem like that.

In terms of the cyber response, though, we really have resisted the temptation at Northern Command to become a cyber command, to be the lead military agency in support of the lead Federal agency. We've left that to General O'Reilly and Cyber Command. But we have a good, close, cooperative working relationship with them.

Chairman LEVIN. Admiral, relative to those two flight tests of the GMD system that failed, do you support the need to take the time to understand and to fix the problem, to conduct whatever testing is necessary to confirm the fix, and to demonstrate that the system works?

Admiral WINNEFELD. Absolutely.

Chairman LEVIN. Whatever time it takes?

Admiral WINNEFELD. Yes, sir. I give General O'Reilly a lot of credit. It would be tempting to stop at the first thing you find wrong in any given test failure, and he's going beyond that. This is why I think it's going to take him a little bit longer to fully dissect what occurred.

I watched that test personally. It was going amazingly well until the last 10 seconds. It was very frustrating. But I think he's got a good handle on what the problem was, and I do believe we need to do subsequent tests.

Chairman LEVIN. Well, I hope you'll continue to take that position, because there's been too much pressure to move the system before it was operationally effective and proven to be operationally effective, and it's had some real costs as a result. These decisions with missile defense ought to be made like any other system. We ought to make sure that it works before we deploy them, and I hope that you will take, continue to take, the position that you're going to make sure that you fix the problems before we continue to manufacture and deploy.

Okay, is that fair enough?

Admiral WINNEFELD. Yes, sir. And I would point out that the missiles that failed were a new and upgraded version of the cur-

rent missiles we have. So based on the test results from the existing what we call CE-1 missiles, I have a lot of confidence in the system. Don't have confidence yet in the CE-2 system, as you point out. And I fully support the appropriate type of testing that General O'Reilly will want to do.

Chairman LEVIN. Well, we thank you both very much again for your being here this morning and for your great service and those of the men and women with whom you work; and we will stand adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:40 a.m., the committee adjourned.]