

Executive Summary Background

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Quadrennial Defense Review: Building Blocks for National Defense

Baker Spring and Mackenzie M. Eaglen

Pursuant to law, the Department of Defense (DOD) will release its Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) strategy in just over one year. The QDR is designed to establish a 20-year defense program that is clear and consistent. Completing the QDR will require tremendous work, effort, coordination, and significant manpower.

Minding the Budget Calendar. Because of the relentless demands of the budget calendar, the Obama Administration needs to set the stage for proper delivery of the QDR by creating a buffer between the demands of the budget calendar and the strategy policy process. Further, to become an enduring strategy for years to come, the QDR must serve the broader purposes of the National Security Strategy. Therefore, both the initial budget decisions and the conduct of the National Security Strategy should precede the QDR.

By giving the Administration significant time to craft a longer-term budget request for defense and other areas of the federal government, the budget process will allow the President and his team to answer the most pressing question: How much government can the economy afford? Assuming reasonable spending restraints by state and local governments, the answer is no more than 20 percent of gross domestic product.

Global Stability and U.S. National Security. America's interests span the world, and its military has global reach and responsibilities. The U.S. military's primary purpose is to deter attacks on and to

defend the homeland. When required, America's military must fight and win wars to protect U.S. security interests. Success requires a military capable of defeating traditional threats posed by nation-states, transnational threats from terrorist organizations and organized crime, and dangers from collapsed states, such as piracy. The United States cannot arbitrarily pick the enemies that it wants to fight or ignore potential threats that may become challenges or conflicts.

Building Blocks for Defense. No defense review can precisely anticipate the full array of operations that the U.S. military may be asked to perform up to two decades in advance. Because not every potential threat can be predicted and because procurement cycles typically take decades to field a particular system, the U.S. military must plan its forces around a grand strategy and hedge with specific capabilities to meet any future requirements. These core capabilities—many of which the military possesses today—should be the mainstays of strategic planning.

This paper, in its entirety, can be found at:
www.heritage.org/Research/NationalSecurity/bg2234.cfm

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The unavoidable fact is that acquiring the manpower and weapons for a strong military takes many years. A defense review that attempts to meet specifically defined operational needs will be short-sighted. Instead, military leaders should focus the QDR on putting in place the basic building blocks to provide the military with assets that may be used to perform the necessary operations as they arise. These building blocks must be sufficiently robust and redundant to permit an effective response to surprises. These essential building blocks include: (1) strategic defense and deterrence; (2) seizing and holding territory against organized ground forces; (3) counterinsurgency capabilities; (4) growing and modernizing the Reserve component; (5) special operations forces; (6) air superiority; (7) long-range bombing; (8) projecting power through the maritime domain; (9) space access and denial; (10) deterring, protecting, denying, and attacking in cyberspace; and (11) global logistics.

Force Structure. To be effective, the defense strategy must then effectively translate the basic building blocks of U.S. military power into specific force structure recommendations. Military force structure should be divided into five components. The first component should describe the U.S. strategic force structure, including ICBMs, submarine-launched ballistic missiles, bombers, long-range ballistic missile defenses and air defenses including cruise missile defenses. The remaining four components of the U.S. military force structure should correspond to the military services, specifically: Air Force wings, Army brigade combat teams, Marine Corps expeditionary forces, and Navy ships and aircraft.

Funding. Fiscal policy alone cannot determine whether the U.S. should continue to devote 4 percent of GDP to defense. Defense policy also plays an essential role in answering this question, primarily through the upcoming QDR. Maintaining the basic building blocks of defense and the associated force

structure and end strength can be achieved based on current defense budget commitments to properly fund military requirements. This projection for funding the core defense program consciously excludes the costs of larger-scale military operations. Such operations should be funded as they arise through supplemental appropriations.

Coordinating with Congress. The defense strategy should outline the broad military capabilities required to defeat a myriad of threats and emerging challenges as well as hedge against the unknown. To bolster its relevance, the next QDR should delineate how the strategy could be implemented on an operational level instead of creating yet another fruitless budget-driven exercise. Defense and military leaders should include Members of Congress in the ongoing strategy dialogue to avoid irrelevance once completed and achieve movement toward consensus.

The 2009 Quadrennial Defense Review does not need to be a radical departure from current Defense Department plans. Instead, it should seek to ensure that the military means for securing the nation and its vital interests are sufficient to the ends of national security. If the Obama Administration establishes a National Security Strategy in keeping with America's tradition of leadership since the end of World War II and uses the Quadrennial Defense Review to keep America's military of sufficient size and strength to meet the needs of this strategy, then it will have done its duty by the Constitution, the American people, and the brave men and women who serve in uniform.

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Background

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Quadrennial Defense Review: Building Blocks for National Defense

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Pursuant to law, the Department of Defense (DOD) will release its Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) strategy in just over one year.¹ Completing the QDR will require tremendous work, effort, coordination, and significant manpower. The QDR is designed to establish a 20-year defense program that is clear and consistent. The most important purpose of this strategy exercise is to permit fiscal, national security, and defense policies to drive defense budgets, instead of letting the budget calendar dictate defense policy.

Too often, the requirements of the budget calendar have marginalized the more deliberate policymaking process. As the incoming Obama Administration turns its attention to this essential task, it needs to ensure that the policy process is the driving force in defense planning. To achieve this, the Secretary of Defense will need to carefully manage the calendar and issue clear directives on how defense budgets will result from the relevant policymaking endeavors.

Ultimately, the QDR's findings must be derived from the fiscal policy and National Security Strategy of the new Administration. These essential policy instruments should be used to set the stage for the QDR's delivery. The review itself should define the essential programmatic building blocks of the overall defense structure and dictate that adequate resources will be devoted to maintaining and, where necessary, creating these building blocks. If done correctly, the QDR can put in place a defense structure that meets U.S. national security needs and that has the resources to sustain itself.

Talking Points

- Given the relentless demands of the budget calendar, the Obama Administration needs to set the stage for the Quadrennial Defense Review by creating a buffer between demands of the budget calendar and the strategy policy process.
- This process gives the Administration time to craft a longer-term defense budget request and answer: How much government can the economy afford? Assuming reasonable spending restraints by state and local governments, the answer is no more than 20 percent of GDP, with 4 percent for defense.
- Because not every potential threat can be predicted and because fielding a new weapons system typically takes decades, the U.S. military must plan its forces around a grand strategy to defeat a myriad of threats and emerging challenges and to hedge against the unknown.
- To bolster its relevance, the next QDR should delineate how the strategy could be implemented operationally, instead of creating yet another fruitless budget-driven exercise.

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The Quadrennial Defense Review will be one of the first major defense strategies generated under the Obama Administration, and this seminal document will guide the military's strategic planning. The QDR's importance and relevance have waned during recent iterations even as the analytical process and support to the strategy review have been bolstered. Congress should ensure that the new assessment goes back to the basics, as originally intended, to achieve sound national security planning with significant buy-in from Capitol Hill.

Global Stability and U.S. National Security

America's interests span the world, and its military has global reach and responsibilities. The U.S. military's primary purpose is to deter attacks on and to defend the homeland. When required, America's military must fight and win wars to protect U.S. security interests. Success requires a military capable of defeating traditional threats posed by nation-states, transnational threats from terrorist organizations and organized crime, and dangers from collapsed states, such as piracy. The United States cannot arbitrarily pick the enemies that it wants to fight or ignore potential threats that may become challenges or conflicts.

Employing military power involves successful direct action as well as engagement and the presence of U.S. forces abroad. It is everything from a show of force to power projection, including training indigenous military elements. U.S. forces also protect America's friends and allies and bolster their military capabilities. The U.S. maintains a substantial deterrent force on the Korean peninsula, has overseen Japanese security for the past half-century, and upholds security guarantees to Taiwan. Similarly, in the Middle East, the U.S. military presence contained the expansive ambitions of Saddam Hussein, decapitated the belligerent governments of Iraq and Afghanistan, conducted nation-building to put these two countries on the path toward modernity, ensured continued access to affordable petroleum for itself and the global economy, committed to the protection of Saudi Arabia, and balanced

against the unpredictable actions of Iran after the overthrow of the Shah in 1979.

Further, America's nuclear weapons and missile defenses not only deter against and protect the country from attack, but also alleviate the concerns of U.S. allies so that they do not need to develop their own potentially destabilizing strategic arsenals. In addition, America's military does more than fight. Because U.S. economic growth is connected to the stability and prosperity of the global economy, the U.S. uses its naval capabilities to protect sea trade, thereby ensuring all maritime assets may transit freely and safely. Eighty percent of international trade and 67 percent of petroleum is transported by sea. One-quarter of global trade passes through the Strait of Malacca alone, and one-third of the U.S. gross domestic product (GDP) is derived from trade.

Additionally, when humanitarian disaster strikes, a strong military enables policymakers to commit America's unique and vast resources to assist countries in need, such as after the 2004 tsunami in the Indian Ocean and the devastating earthquake in Pakistan in 2005.

Critics of America's defense spending often point to the size of its defense budget compared with global spending in an effort to argue for reducing America's hard-power capabilities. The U.S. defense budget in real dollars is on par with spending by the rest of the world combined. Many question how such a massive budget can be justified, even during wartime. Even though the Cold War is over, the U.S. still has global interests and global responsibilities, and they cannot be protected with an insufficient budget.

Those who have argued that America's defense budget is too large also protest that it could be reduced if U.S. allies would invest their fair share. While the defense budgets of European and some Asian powers are in decline, "[t]o depend on allies to carry out our strategy is the height of folly," as Representative Ike Skelton (D-MO), chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, has argued.²

1. 10 U.S. Code § 118.

2. Ike Skelton, quoted in Mackenzie Eaglen, "Balancing Strategy and Budgets," *Armed Forces Journal*, October 2008, at <http://www.armedforcesjournal.com/2008/10/3666455> (January 22, 2009).

While increased defense spending by France, Germany, or Japan would be a positive development, America should not reduce its own defense budget, thereby compromising security, in the hope that others will fill the void. If U.S. allies increase their defense budgets, America could then consider adjusting its own budget. Until then, cutting spending and hoping for the best is irresponsible.

Minding the Budget Calendar

Because of the relentless demands of the budget calendar, the new Administration needs to set the stage for proper delivery of the QDR by creating a buffer between the demands of the budget calendar and the strategy policy process. Further, to become an enduring strategy for years to come, the QDR must serve the broader purposes of the National Security Strategy. Therefore, both the initial budget decisions and the conduct of the National Security Strategy should precede the QDR.

Strategy always changes faster than force structure. Paring defense budgets to what Washington wishes to spend can be justified by adopting a more modest and restrained strategy. When demands change, as happened with the outbreak of the Korean War, strategy can be modified, but fielding forces adequate to implement abrupt changes may take years. In the meantime, the cost of being unprepared is often measured in the lives of men and women in the armed forces and the compromised national security.

Because not every potential threat can be predicted and because procurement cycles typically take decades to field a particular system, the U.S. military must plan its forces around a grand strategy and hedge with specific capabilities to meet any future requirements. These core capabilities—many of which the military possesses today—should be the mainstays of strategic planning. They include:

- Protecting and defending the U.S. and its allies against attack,
- Air dominance,
- Maritime control,
- Space control,
- Counterterrorism,

- Counterinsurgency,
- The ability to seize and control territory against organized ground forces,
- Projecting power to distant regions, and
- Information dominance throughout cyberspace.

No Administration can ignore the annual budget calendar, and the Obama Administration will undoubtedly invest much time and effort in the budget process. President Barack Obama should first seek to establish a buffer between the budget process and defense policy to prevent the budget process from driving defense policy. At the outset, the Administration should announce that it will carry over the Bush Administration's defense policies and budgets for an interim period. The explicit message would be that U.S. defense policy and budget changes will be the product of the pending National Security Strategy and subsequent QDR. Specifically, the new Administration should announce that the defense budget plan of the Bush Administration for the remainder of fiscal year (FY) 2009, including anticipated supplemental appropriations, will remain in place. Next, the new leadership should announce that the President's budget requests for FY 2010 through FY 2014 should be considered placeholders until the QDR is completed, when the Administration can frame a coherent defense plan for the coming years.

The Obama Administration's first official budget submission will be for FY 2010. This initial submission may simply serve as a bridge. By giving the new Administration significant time to craft a longer-term budget request for defense and other areas of the federal government, the budget process will allow the President and his team to answer the most pressing question: How much government can the economy afford? Assuming reasonable spending restraints by state and local governments, the answer is no more than 20 percent of GDP. With this fundamental question answered, all subsequent budget deliberations are really about dividing the federal budget pie. On this basis, the budget target for defense should be to maintain today's levels of spending, adjusting for economic growth—roughly 4 percent of GDP.

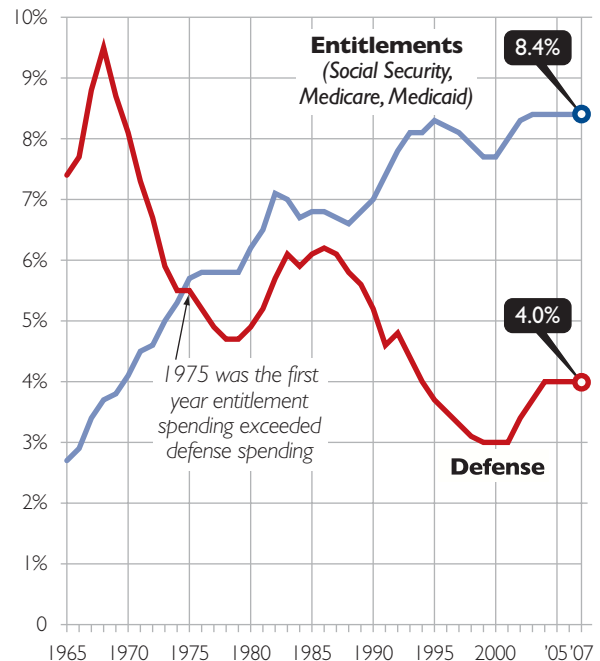
Implicit in this broader allocation of the budget is that economic growth must come first over the longer term, even before defense. Brookings Institution Senior Fellow Michael O'Hanlon is certainly correct when he states, "The nation's economic and demographic strength are as crucial to long-term national security as are the armed forces, and good fiscal management should begin from that premise."³ While military power will trump economic power in the short term, economic power will trump military power in the longer term. Federal programs, including defense, are funded with dollars. A larger economy will permit larger allocations to these federal activities under a policy that pegs total federal spending at an appropriate level as a percentage of GDP. If the Administration and Congress want to spend more, they should earn it by growing the economy first.

Also implicit in budget determinations is that defense spending has not caused the federal government's current and projected fiscal woes. This point seems to have escaped Michael O'Hanlon and other critics of establishing a floor for defense spending pegged to GDP. Defense has gradually declined as a percent of GDP since the 1960s, while spending on the major entitlements has generally exceeded economic growth rates over the same period. (See Chart 1.) Further, current projections show that spending on the major entitlements will far outpace economic growth in the decades to come.⁴ Going into the QDR, all stakeholders should acknowledge that the economy can afford to devote no less than 4 percent of GDP to the core defense program. This approach offers a long-term policy option for the broader federal budget that serves to protect the U.S. economy.

Congress has directed that the QDR follow from the broader National Security Strategy. This is appropriate because military capabilities are not an end in themselves, but rather they are means of providing national security. By design, the new Administration's most immediate task will be to issue the National Security Strategy.

Defense Spending Less than Half of Major Entitlement Spending

Percentage of Gross Domestic Product



Source: Heritage Foundation calculations based on U.S. Office of Management and Budget, *Historical Tables, Budget of the United States Government, Fiscal Year 2009* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2008), at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget/fy2009/pdf/hist.pdf> (January 15, 2009).

Chart 1 • B 2234  heritage.org

While the details of the Obama Administration's National Security Strategy will differ from the existing strategy, the core provisions related to the defense posture should be rather predictable because they follow from the vital interests that the U.S. must protect and the roles that U.S. armed forces play in achieving that end. The nation's vital national interests have proven remarkably consistent and enduring over time. They include:

- Defending against and deterring strategic attacks on the U.S., including its people, territory, institutions, and infrastructure;

3. Michael O'Hanlon, "The 4 Percent Defense Spending Chimera," *The Washington Times*, November 11, 2008, at <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2008/nov/11/the-4-percent-defense-spending-chimera> (January 20, 2009).

4. U.S. Government Accountability Office, "Saving Our Future Requires Tough Choices Today," GAO-07-222CG, November 8, 2006, at <http://www.gao.gov/cghome/d07222cg.pdf> (January 19, 2009).

- Protecting Americans against threats to their lives and well-being, short of strategic attacks;
- Preventing the rise of a dominant hostile power in East Asia, Europe, or the Persian Gulf;
- Preserving U.S. security interests in the Western Hemisphere;
- Maintaining access to foreign trade; and
- Retaining unencumbered access to resources.⁵

Indeed, if the next National Security Strategy does not identify these vital interests, it will be deficient, and Congress and the American people should reject it. Such omissions would be akin to having an Administration say that it is unwilling to defend the American people against strategic attacks or that Venezuelan interdiction of shipping in the Caribbean or a Chinese invasion and occupation of Taiwan, Korea, and Japan would be of no concern to the United States.

Based on a National Security Strategy that identifies these long-standing vital interests, the QDR can describe the building blocks that the military will need to secure these interests. Of course, the U.S. military is not the only instrument of national power that can be used to secure these interests. The armed forces and civilian defense should accompany the other instruments of national power.

The next Quadrennial Defense Review should live up to its core purpose of detailing the means that the military needs to meet its responsibilities. The QDR should outline the broad military capabilities required to defeat a myriad of threats and emerging challenges as well as hedge against the unknown. To bolster its relevance, the next QDR should delineate how the strategy could be implemented on an operational level, instead of creating yet another fruitless budget-driven exercise.

Building Blocks for Defense

No defense review can precisely anticipate the full array of operations that the U.S. military may be asked to perform up to two decades in advance. For example, few anticipated the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait even a year ahead, much less on the 20-year time horizon of the QDR. However, because of Cold War planning to counter Soviet conventional attacks, the Department of Defense possessed sufficient conventional military strength to conduct Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm.

The unavoidable fact is that acquiring the manpower and weapons for a strong military takes many years. A defense review that attempts to meet specifically defined operational needs—for example, special operations for countering al-Qaeda or counterinsurgency operations in Iraq—will be short-sighted. Instead, military leaders should focus the QDR on putting in place the basic building blocks to provide the military with assets that may be used to perform the necessary operations as they arise. These building blocks must be sufficiently robust and redundant to permit an effective response to surprises.

The next QDR should recommend the following basic military building blocks to Congress:

Building Block #1: Strategic defense and deterrence

By law, strategic force planning is under the purview of the QDR's companion review called the Nuclear Posture Review (NPR).⁶ Congress has already appointed the Congressional Commission on the Strategic Posture of the United States (Strategic Posture Commission) to address these issues, and it released its interim report on December 12, 2008.⁷ Despite this division of responsibility, this paper addresses both reviews in order to discuss all aspects of the defense program and budget.

5. James Jay Carafano, Mackenzie Eaglen, and Baker Spring, "Providing for the Common Defense: What 10 Years of Progress Would Look Like," Heritage Foundation *Background* No. 2108, February 19, 2008, p. 2, at <http://www.heritage.org/Research/NationalSecurity/bg2108.cfm>.

6. National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008, Public Law 110-181, § 1070.

7. *Ibid.*, § 1062, and Congressional Commission on the Strategic Posture of the United States, "Interim Report," United States Institute of Peace, December 12, 2008.

The Heritage Foundation has released a *Backgrounder* stating what the Strategic Posture Commission should recommend to Congress.⁸ It has also released a *WebMemo* on the Interim Report of the Strategic Posture Commission.⁹ The companion NPR, which is better described as a strategic posture review, should follow Heritage's recommendations for the Strategic Posture Commission. The chief recommendation is that the U.S. should replace the retaliation-based deterrence strategy of the Cold War with a strategy to defend the people, territories, institutions, and infrastructure of the U.S. and its allies against strategic attacks. Further, Heritage recommends executing this defensive strategy by fielding an array of strategic forces that combines offensive nuclear systems, conventional strategic strike systems, and defense capabilities.

The U.S. strategic posture is not ideally suited for executing this strategy because most of its elements were carried over from the Cold War and its retaliation-based deterrence strategy. The strategic nuclear force has been atrophying since the end of the Cold War. Congress has been reluctant to pursue conventional strategic strike systems, such as a conventionally armed Trident II missile. The U.S. is building ballistic missile defenses, but is still recovering from the 30 years during which the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty all but barred the development, testing, and deployment of missile defense systems.

Given the fundamental shift in strategy recommended by The Heritage Foundation, making precise strategic force posture recommendations is impossible at this point. This will depend on President Obama issuing a strategic targeting directive that is consistent with the "protect and defend" strategy. The NPR should recommend, pending the execution of a new targeting directive, that the Department of Defense pursue initial modernization efforts in all three elements of the strategic posture—nuclear, conventional, and defensive systems and capabilities—with the general purpose of

blunting strategic strikes against the U.S. and its allies. This alternative approach recognizes that there is no direct route to global nuclear disarmament at this time. Pursued appropriately, however, it could lead to a circumstance in which global nuclear disarmament may be sought more directly.

Building Block #2: Seizing and holding territory against organized ground forces

In the conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq, U.S. ground forces have been focused on the counterinsurgency and counterterrorism missions. While this near-term emphasis on the counterinsurgency and counterterrorism missions is appropriate, it would be wrong to assert that U.S. ground forces no longer need to concern themselves with the mission of countering organized enemy armies.

The chances are considerable that within the next 20 years U.S. ground forces will face an enemy state's army in a land conflict of significant size and duration. At that time, U.S. ground forces will need to be capable of seizing and holding territory against these armies. This means that the U.S. Army in particular must include heavy forces in its mix of units. In other words, armored and heavy infantry brigades must accompany the light infantry, airborne, and special operations units in the Army.

In terms of acquisition programs for heavy ground combat, the Army will need to obtain the next generation of armored vehicles represented by Stryker brigades and the Future Combat Systems (FCS). It will also need to field air and missile defense capabilities organically with its forces through the fielding of the Patriot and Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) systems.

Army aviation is in a state of flux. The Comanche helicopter program was canceled in 2004. Yet the Army will need to field a combination of manned helicopters and unmanned aerial systems. Finally, the Army will need to modernize both its service-based and joint command, control, and communications systems to support large-scale ground operations.

8. Baker Spring, "Congressional Commission Should Recommend a 'Damage Limitation' Strategy," Heritage Foundation *Backgrounder* No. 2172, August 14, 2008, at <http://www.heritage.org/Research/NationalSecurity/bg2172.cfm>.

9. Baker Spring, "Toward an Alternative Strategic Security Posture," Heritage Foundation *WebMemo* No. 2183, January 2, 2009, at <http://www.heritage.org/Research/NationalSecurity/wm2183.cfm> (January 5, 2009).

Building Block #3: Counterinsurgency capabilities

The emerging threat environment is markedly different from the Cold War landscape that shaped today's force. America's post-Cold War enemies have sought to offset the Army's firepower advantage based on two strategic understandings. First, "casualties are America's vital center of gravity." Therefore, killing American personnel is no longer a means to victory, but an end. Second, America's enemies know that they cannot match U.S. soldiers head-to-head, so they avoid direct engagement believing that if they prolong the conflict long enough, America will tire of it first. Consequently, their "strategic end game [is] not to win but to avoid losing."¹⁰

Since 2001, the United States has fought successive waves of non-state groups that operate asymmetrically as dispersed networks rather than as traditional military forces. Israel's experience with Hezbollah shows the growing sophistication of the asymmetric threat to the West. Indeed, the Hezbollah insurgency was much more complex than the Iraqi insurgency with greater strategic planning and tactical forethought. Hezbollah shows the limits of traditional, conventional arms and the growing importance of network-enabled warfare. Army leaders have drawn several significant conclusions from these types of conflicts. First, they demonstrate that the greatest challenge for land forces is not irregular, traditional, catastrophic, or disruptive conflicts, but rather the potential combination of all four types of conflicts simultaneously. Second, "finding the enemy and then rapidly acting on that information" is vital to success on the battlefield.¹¹ The Army will likely conduct operations on the enemy's turf, where the enemy not only possesses greater understanding of the battlefield landscape, but also has had ample time to prepare a layered defense.

History continues to demonstrate that U.S. ground forces will need to remain institutionally proficient in conducting counterinsurgency operations. Clearly, counterinsurgency operations will be a significant component of the effort to combat terrorists in the long war against terrorism.¹² Maintaining the counterinsurgency building block is as much about applying doctrine as how the ground forces are structured, trained, and equipped. Nevertheless, the questions of how to structure, train, and equip the ground forces remain relevant. In terms of structure, the infantry forces in the Army and the Marines will generally be responsible for the bulk of counterinsurgency operations. Thus, these units should be the focus of counterinsurgency education and training. In terms of equipment, the Army and Marine Corps will need systems that permit them to mingle with civilian populations that share the same space with insurgent forces. The array of intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance capabilities included in the Army's FCS program should offer potential advantages in this area.

Counterinsurgency capabilities should also be acquired for a range of constabulary missions, including stability, post-conflict, homeland defense, and support to civil authorities at home and overseas. "Constabulary" refers to hybrid roles and missions that involve both military prowess, such as lethal fire against "go-fast" boats in drug transit zones, and law enforcement authorities, such as interdicting illegal migrants and protecting fisheries.¹³

Post-conflict operations require more than DOD participation. They require multiple U.S. agencies to coordinate their activities, especially in the post-conflict phase of a regime change. Non-military expertise is essential to restoring basic public services, repairing transportation and power generation infrastructure, repatriating prisoners of war,

10. Major General Robert H. Scales Jr. (Ret.) and Frank Kendall, "The Future Combat Systems (FCS): Its Origins and Concept of Employment," unpublished paper, p. 2.

11. U.S. Army, "2007 Posture Statement," February 14, 2007, at <http://www.army.mil/aps/07/execSummary.html> (January 25, 2009).

12. James Jay Carafano and Paul Rosenzweig, *Winning the Long War: Lessons from the Cold War for Defeating Terrorism and Preserving Freedom* (Washington, D.C.: The Heritage Foundation, 2005).

13. Mackenzie Eaglen, James Dolbow, Martin Edwin Andersen, and James Jay Carafano, "Securing the High Seas: America's Global Maritime Constabulary Power," Heritage Foundation *Special Report* No. 20, March 12, 2008, p. 3, at <http://www.heritage.org/Research/NationalSecurity/sr20.cfm>.

assisting with the return of refugees and internally displaced persons, creating a judicial system, and restarting an economy and creating jobs. The hard-power and soft-power skills needed to conduct effective post-conflict tasks should be combined within regional teams, such as the capacity to destroy the old regime and then restore security, avert or alleviate a humanitarian crisis, and reestablish a legitimate government. To perform all of these functions, the regional teams must be able to work in a joint interagency and multinational environment. The services must retain, refine, and teach the operational concepts and practices relevant to post-conflict missions.¹⁴

However, arguing that the U.S. military should focus solely on irregular threats and refining counterinsurgency skills by shifting from conventional skills and building weapons to counter current threats is a zero-sum exercise. The QDR should recognize that the U.S. military must be able to counter myriad threats and possess unmatched capabilities in varying contingencies that are not prioritized one over the other. A deliberate assessment of the likelihood of potential threats and enemies is required before procuring the appropriate capabilities to prevail in future conventional and irregular conflicts.

Building Block #4: Growing and modernizing the Reserve component

Congress should consider mandating the Department of Defense to retain force training and force structure packages appropriate to post-conflict tasks after major combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan subside. This could be achieved by training and equipping allies to perform these duties, retraining and reorganizing U.S. combat forces, and maintaining unique U.S. post-conflict forces. Special post-conflict units could be assembled from existing National Guard and Reserve

units, including security, medical, engineer, and public affairs commands. Since many responsibilities involved in postwar duties are similar to homeland security missions, these forces could perform double duty.¹⁵

Guard and Reserve forces are tremendous force multipliers. Their value cannot be measured in fiscal terms alone. These essential personnel relieve the strain that active-duty forces endure from their high operating tempo at home and abroad. Guard and Reserve forces provide countless benefits to the nation beyond warfighting and responding to domestic emergencies:

These benefits include the reserve components' close ties to their communities, the forward deployment of military first responders throughout the country, civilian-acquired skills that are not readily attainable or maintainable in a full-time military force, the preservation of costly training and experience possessed by service members who are leaving the active component, and the maintenance of a large pool of strategic military capabilities.¹⁶

With this kind of quantitative and qualitative return on investment, the last thing Pentagon leaders should do is begin a subtle dismantling of its two most cost-effective major commands. Any prudent future defense strategy should encourage the growth of these unique forces to meet national security needs and provide specialized capabilities and skill sets.

The active and Reserve components must better plan and program together to synchronize modernization investments and avoid redundant capabilities. Active component modernization programs should be vigorously reviewed and altered to ensure they meet Reserve component requirements. For example, the U.S. Army should create a comprehensive mod-

14. James Jay Carafano and Dana R. Dillon, "Winning the Peace: Principles for Post-Conflict Operations," Heritage Foundation *Backgrounder* No. 1859, June 13, 2005, at <http://www.heritage.org/Research/NationalSecurity/bg1859.cfm>.

15. James Jay Carafano, "Shaping the Future of Northern Command," Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments *Backgrounder*, April 29, 2003, p. 12, at <http://www.csbaonline.org/4Publications/PubLibrary/B.20030429.NORTHCOM/B.20030429.NORTHCOM.pdf> (January 20, 2009).

16. Commission on the National Guard and Reserves, *Transforming the National Guard and Reserves into a 21st-Century Operational Force*, January 31, 2008, p. 68, at <http://www.cngr.gov/Final%20Report/CNGR%20Final%20Report.pdf> (January 20, 2009).

ernization plan for non-maneuver brigades (for example, fire support, mobility, aviation, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance) that accounts equally for strategic and tactical mobility. The National Guard's ongoing missions highlight the need to provide equipment to the Guard that can be used in all of its mission areas from domestic disaster response to warfighting. Guard leadership has previously identified the "Essential 10" dual-use equipment areas: joint headquarters and command and control, civil support teams and force protection, maintenance, aviation, engineering, medical, communications, transportation, security, and logistics.¹⁷

Building Block #5: Special Operations Forces

An important element of success in the long war will be finding and capturing or destroying the Islamist forces that use terrorism as a tool. Given that these enemy forces are organized into widely dispersed small cells, U.S. Special Operations Forces (SOF) are ideally suited to conducting the counterterrorism mission. Special operations units also fulfill vital roles in supporting larger-scale military operations by operating behind enemy lines.

However, these elite forces do more than kill or capture. Training and equipping foreign militaries to avoid future conflicts continues to be a critical special operations mission. Since 9/11, the U.S. has worked diligently to train and equip foreign militaries in counterterrorism and other military and stability operations. Both U.S. Southern Command and U.S. Africa Command have made building partnerships and enhancing strategic cooperation central pillars of their missions. These initiatives also help to prevent conflict by strengthening respect for civil-military relations.

SOF units need highly specialized training to achieve their capabilities. The weapons and equipment needs for these units fall into niches. Insertion

and extraction systems, including air, submarine, and ground platforms, will be needed. This will require extending and modernizing the MH-47 Chinook and the MH-60 Blackhawk programs and procuring the highly capable CV-22 Osprey. In the maritime domain, a number of platforms are nearing the end of their service life, placing an increased emphasis on identifying the next generation of surface and subsurface solutions.¹⁸ Special Operations Forces also need highly lethal weapons that can be operated by small units with sometimes tenuous supply lines. Primary among these is the AC-130, on which the U.S. Special Operations Command has relied heavily in the current operations to the point that the aircraft have aged prematurely.¹⁹

Building Block #6: Air superiority

Achieving and maintaining dominance in the air during wartime is a trademark of the U.S. military, and it should remain so.²⁰ In the past, the U.S. has maintained this building block by acquiring the world's most sophisticated aircraft and manning them with the world's best pilots, whether Air Force, Navy, or Marine. However, air superiority will increasingly be about acquiring the world's best unmanned combat aerial vehicles (UCAVs).

The U.S. will still need to obtain the best manned combat aircraft. In this regard, the trend has been in the direction of combining the air superiority and attack capabilities in the same aircraft. The Navy and Marine Corps F/A-18 Super Hornet is one example. Even the F-22 Raptor has been given attack capabilities. This raises the question of whether this is a healthy trend. Overall combat aircraft superiority may be better maintained by a platform dedicated to just the air superiority mission with another platform dedicated to attack. Combined formations of these aircraft could carry out combat operations.

17. National Guard Bureau, Office of Legislative Liaison, "National Guard Equipment Requirements: 'Essential 10' Equipment Requirements for the Global War on Terror," March 16, 2006, at [http://www.ngb.army.mil/ll/analysisdocs/07/essential10_equiplist\(Mar06\).pdf](http://www.ngb.army.mil/ll/analysisdocs/07/essential10_equiplist(Mar06).pdf) (January 20, 2009).

18. U.S. Department of Defense, Special Operations Command, "USSOCOM Posture Statement 2007," 2007, at <http://www.fas.org/irp/agency/dod/socom/posture2007.pdf> (December 12, 2008).

19. *Ibid.*

20. Rebecca Grant, "Losing Air Dominance," Mitchell Institute *Special Report*, September 2008, at http://www.afa.org/Mitchell/reports/0908air_dominance.pdf (December 11, 2008).

If specialization proves to be the better alternative, the F-22 should be returned to its exclusive air superiority mission, and the F/A-18 should be reconfigured to an “F-model” aircraft. The Joint Strike Fighter should be shifted to an “A-model” aircraft. The A-10 Thunderbolt should remain the premier close air support aircraft, although the Air Force should be directed to initiate designs for the A-10’s successor. Likewise, the Navy should be instructed to explore the feasibility of basing a new dedicated close air support aircraft on aircraft carriers and amphibious ships to support the Marines.

While UCAVs should not replace manned combat aircraft in the 20-year time horizon of the QDR, they will assume greater responsibilities. For example, the Reaper UCAV is demonstrating its capabilities in operations in Afghanistan and Iraq.²¹ Both the Air Force and the Navy should continue to explore options for using UCAVs for a variety of combat missions, including suppression of enemy air defenses, attack missions, air-to-air self defense, and even boost-phase missile defense in concert with the NCADE system.²²

Building Block #7: Long-range bombing

Long-range bombers, particularly those that are capable of delivering nuclear weapons, make a vital contribution to strategic defense and deterrence. They also play a vital role in conventional conflicts by delivering ordnance against enemy targets throughout the world.

Amazingly, the Air Force continues to rely on the B-52 as the backbone of its conventional long-range bomber force. As of September 2007, the average bomber (including B-1Bs and B-2s) on active duty was almost 32 years old, and this age will likely reach 40 years before a new bomber can

be fielded.²³ Furthermore, technological advancements and proliferation of global air defense systems in the past decade are making the B-52 more vulnerable. Richard P. Hallion, former chief historian of the Air Force, notes that the B-52 was designed to handle air defenses that today are considered museum pieces.²⁴ The Air Force’s 2007 white paper on long-range strikes also highlighted this dilemma: “the B-1 and B-52 are not survivable under the 2015–2020 expected threat picture.”²⁵ While the 2006 QDR was instrumental in initiating the process to acquire a new bomber, the Obama Administration needs to ensure that this effort remains on target for 2018 and overcomes the myriad technological obstacles that will inevitably arise.

A new long-range bomber could also bolster the air leg of the U.S. strategic triad in protecting and defending the people, territory, institutions, and infrastructure of the U.S. and its allies against strategic attack.

Building Block #8: Projecting power through the maritime domain

The U.S. Navy’s primary responsibility is to defend freedom of the high seas, including protecting sea lines of communications. It shares responsibility with the Marine Corps for projecting power from ship to shore in the littorals.

First, the Navy needs to be a blue-water navy. This means that the fleet must include a balance of major surface and subsurface combatants, including aircraft carriers, cruisers, destroyers, and attack submarines. The most prominent capabilities of this balanced fleet will remain:

- Controlling the surface of the oceans in broad areas,

21. Tom Vanden Brook, “Air Force Requests More Fighter Drones,” *USA Today*, March 6, 2008.

22. Baker Spring, “Congress Should Fund Development of Air-to-Air Missile Defense Technology,” Heritage Foundation *WebMemo* No. 1904, April 28, 2008, at <http://www.heritage.org/Research/NationalSecurity/wm1904.cfm>.

23. As of September 2007, the average B-52 on active duty was almost 46 years old. “The Air Force in Facts and Figures,” *Air Force Magazine*, May 2008, p. 61, at http://www.airforce-magazine.com/MagazineArchive/Magazine%20Documents/2008/May%202008/0508facts_figs.pdf (February 9, 2009).

24. Richard P. Hillion, “Does Long Range Strike Have a Future?” Air Force Association National Air and Space Conference, September 25, 2006.

25. U.S. Air Force, “Long Range Strike,” White Paper, 2007, p. 13.

- Controlling the air space over these areas, and
- Conducting anti-submarine warfare.

These capabilities enable the U.S. to project military power to distant regions, including Asia, Europe, and the Middle East. They also permit the U.S. to protect vital trade routes.

Once the Navy has established a forward presence in distant littoral areas, which is permitted by its blue-water capabilities, it should partner with the Marine Corps to project power from ship to shore. This will require further balancing the fleet to include amphibious ships, with supporting aviation systems and landing vehicles, littoral combat ships, minesweepers, and maritime prepositioned assets beyond those required for the blue-water fleet.

Building Block #9: Space access and denial

The U.S. heavily depends on space-based systems to support military operations and its economy, but these systems are highly vulnerable to attack. The Department of Defense needs to take steps to reduce the vulnerability of its space-based systems and assume the role of guardian of the space-based systems owned and operated by private-sector merchants.

In this context, space and the high seas share considerable similarities as geographic domains. No nation owns the high seas, and no nation should own outer space beyond territorial air space. Nevertheless, the U.S. Navy serves as the guarantor of access to the high seas for all nations that wish to use them for peaceful purposes. It denies access to the high seas to those forces that would use the seas for hostile purposes. The U.S. military should seek to play a similar role in space.

The first step in obtaining the ability to protect access to outer space for commerce, while denying access to those with hostile intent, is to achieve a robust level of space situational awareness. Space situational awareness would permit the U.S. military to identify the satellites in orbit and understand their purposes. This means that the military will

need systems that monitor space on a regular basis and that can identify the purposes of satellites with a high degree of confidence.

The second step is to field operationally responsive space systems, which will increase the resiliency of satellite networks by permitting the rapid replacement of satellites that are damaged or destroyed by natural causes or enemy attack.²⁶ This means maintaining both replacement satellites and efficient and redundant launch systems and complexes. The availability of responsive satellites would have the added benefit of dissuading and deterring the development or use of anti-satellite weapons.

The final step is to field offensive and defensive counterspace systems. Defensive counterspace systems can be passive, such as a system hardened against the effects of electromagnetic pulse. Active systems could include defensive interceptors deployed in space to counter direct-ascent kinetic energy anti-satellite (ASAT) weapons. Offensive counterspace systems would permit the U.S. military to deny access to space to those that would use it for hostile purposes. In this case, a U.S. fleet of ASATs should be developed, tested, and fielded.

Building Block #10: Deterring, protecting, denying, and attacking in cyberspace

Modern warfare increasingly depends on advanced computers, and no country's armed forces are more reliant on the digital age for information superiority than the U.S. military. This is both the American military's greatest strength and potentially its greatest weakness.

Today, the Pentagon uses more than 5 million computers on 100,000 networks at up to 1,500 sites in at least 65 countries worldwide. Not surprisingly, potential adversaries have taken note of America's dependence on information technology.²⁷

Cyber operations, including computer network attack and exploitation, appeal to many state and non-state actors, including terrorists, because they can be low-cost, low-risk, and highly effective, and

26. Eric Sayers, "An Outer Space Defense Bargain," *Armed Forces Journal*, October 2008, at <http://www.afji.com/2008/10/3651724> (January 20, 2009).

27. Peter Brookes, "The Cyber Challenge," *Armed Forces Journal*, March 2008, at <http://www.armedforcesjournal.com/2008/03/3463904> (January 21, 2009).

they provide plausible deniability for the attacker, which can route operations through any number of surrogate servers across the Web en route to its target.

The Defense Department suffers tens of thousands of computer network attacks annually. Although the department is understandably cautious about revealing the success of these attacks, some of these cyber assaults allegedly reduced the military's operational capabilities.

Although it is impossible to say how many raids go undetected, cyber attacks have grown increasingly sophisticated. The threat has evolved from the work of curious hackers to premeditated government-sponsored operations that embrace a variety of security-related purposes.²⁸

However, the requirements for structuring, manning, equipping, and training U.S. cyber forces are still not well understood. Thus, the first step for the QDR is to affirm the military mission of guaranteeing U.S. access to cyberspace and denying access to those that would launch cyber attacks against the U.S. or its allies. It should assign to the appropriate service, probably the Air Force, the responsibility of developing the necessary operational concepts, trained forces, and equipment to fulfill this mission effectively. To improve U.S. capabilities, this lead service should look for best practices both inside and outside of government, including the private sector's cutting-edge capabilities.

The DOD needs a risk-based approach to the cyber threat, including an assessment of criticality, threat, and vulnerability as well as measures to reduce risks efficiently and effectively. This knowledge and leadership can be developed by establishing effective interagency programs for professional development of cyber skills through education, assignment, and accreditation.²⁹

Building Block #11: Global logistics

To meet U.S. defense needs given U.S. global interests and responsibilities, the military must have a logistical infrastructure to support global operations. This infrastructure includes airlift, sealift, maritime prepositioned assets, and military bases overseas. The C-17 and C-5 provide the backbone of the U.S. Transportation Command strategic airlift fleet. However, with the C-17 production line expected to shut down in 2010 and the outcome of the next-generation KC-X tanker still undetermined, the future reliability of strategic airlift is in some doubt.

Fully stocked weapons reserves hedge against future contingencies. Prepositioning military supplies and equipment aboard ships in strategic areas and U.S. sealift capabilities guarantee the availability of needed equipment in the event of a major theater war, a humanitarian crisis, or other incident requiring a military presence. Prepositioning also helps to guarantee the military timely access to distant areas by reducing America's reliance on foreign countries for basing rights. However, with the expected shortfalls in amphibious lift ships, new assumptions about their extended service life may exacerbate the logistical problems.³⁰

A worldwide information and communications system to manage the broader logistical system is also critical. This logistical infrastructure, including the information and management elements, must be continuously maintained and modernized. The successful realignment of overseas bases as part of the Global Posture Review will also help to ensure that America's global reach and flexibility remain intact.³¹

Force Structure Considerations

The next step for the QDR is to translate these basic building blocks of U.S. military power into a

28. James Jay Carafano and Richard Weitz, "Combating Enemies Online: State-Sponsored and Terrorist Use of the Internet," Heritage Foundation *Backgrounder* No. 2105, February 8, 2008, pp. 3–4, at <http://www.heritage.org/Research/nationalSecurity/bg2105.cfm>.

29. James Jay Carafano and Eric Sayers, "Building Cyber Security Leadership for the 21st Century," Heritage Foundation *Backgrounder* No. 2218, December 16, 2008, at <http://www.heritage.org/Research/NationalSecurity/bg2218.cfm>.

30. Ronald O'Rourke, "Navy Force Structure and Shipbuilding Plans: Background and Issues for Congress," Congressional Research Service *Report for Congress*, October 2, 2008, at http://assets.opencrs.com/rpts/RL32665_20081002.pdf (January 22, 2009).

specific force structure recommendation. The military force structure should be divided into five components. The first component should describe the U.S. strategic force structure, including ICBMs, submarine-launched ballistic missiles, bombers, long-range ballistic missile defenses, and air defenses including cruise missile defenses.³² The remaining four components would correspond to the military services, specifically Air Force wings, Army combat brigade teams, Marine Corps expeditionary forces, and Navy ships and aircraft.

Strategic Forces. Currently, the U.S. strategic nuclear triad has roughly 4,200 deliverable strategic nuclear warheads.³³ (See Table 1.) These include approximately 1,200 warheads on 450 Minuteman III ICBMs, 14 Trident ballistic missile submarines with 336 Trident II missiles that carry approximately 2,000 warheads, and 20 B-2 bombers that carry about 320 warheads. The Air Force has 94 B-52 bombers, but only about half of them are equipped to carry nuclear weapons. Under the 2002 Moscow Treaty on Strategic Offensive Reductions, the U.S. strategic nuclear force will be reduced to between 1,700 and 2,200 operationally deployed warheads by 2012. The entire force, including platforms and weapons, has been carried over from the Cold War through service life extension programs.

The 2001 NPR provides the justification for the size of the U.S. strategic nuclear force under the Moscow Treaty. While the reasoning behind this number may be compelling, it is rather obscure to the public. A recent report by Secretary of Defense Robert Gates and Secretary of Energy Samuel Bodman states only that “the size of the U.S. nuclear

Current Strategic Nuclear Forces of the United States

System Type	System Number	Warhead Number
Minuteman III ICBM	450	1,200
Trident II SLBM (on 14 submarines)	336	≈ 2,000
B-2 Bomber	20	320
B-52 Bomber (Nuclear)	47	≈ 750
Total	853	≈ 4,200

Source: Amy F. Woolf, “U.S. Strategic Nuclear Forces: Background, Developments, and Issues,” Congressional Research Service Report for Congress, updated August 5, 2008, at <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/nuke/RL33640.pdf> (October 1, 2008).

Table 1 • B 2234  heritage.org

force is now based on the ability of the operationally deployed force, the force structure, and the supporting nuclear infrastructure to meet a spectrum of political and military goals.”³⁴

The active strategic defensive forces of the U.S. remain limited. As of the end of 2007, the U.S. had fielded 24 long-range ballistic missile defense interceptors in Alaska and California.³⁵ By 2013, the U.S. plans to have 54 interceptors based in Alaska, California, and Poland.³⁶ Given the current and forecasted trends in ballistic missile modernization and proliferation, U.S. ballistic missile defense capabilities will continue to lag behind the threat, although they are starting to catch up.

31. For an analysis of the ongoing process, see Michael O’Hanlon, “Unfinished Business: U.S. Oversees Military Presence in the 21st Century,” Center for a New American Security, June 2008, at http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/reports/2008/06_military_ohanlon/06_military_ohanlon.pdf (January 22, 2009).
32. Counterterrorism and civil defenses for defending against terrorists and state actors delivering weapons of mass destruction against the U.S. by clandestine means are best described as capabilities, not on the basis of force structure.
33. Amy F. Woolf, “U.S. Strategic Nuclear Forces: Background, Developments, and Issues,” Congressional Research Service Report for Congress, updated August 5, 2008, at <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/nuke/RL33640.pdf> (October 1, 2008).
34. Samuel W. Bodman and Robert M. Gates, “National Security and Nuclear Weapons in the 21st Century,” U.S. Department of Energy and U.S. Department of Defense, September 2008, p. 10, at <http://www.defenselink.mil/news/nuclearweaponspolicy.pdf> (January 20, 2009).
35. Missile Defense Agency, “Fiscal Year 2009 Budget Estimates,” January 23, 2008, p. 3.
36. *Ibid.*, p. 25.

The force structure for the air defense of North America under the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) is not made public for reasons of operational security.³⁷ Strategic defenses provide no force structure dedicated to defending North America against cruise missiles.

The Heritage Foundation recommends that the U.S. adopt a strategy of protecting and defending its population, territory, institutions, and infrastructure against strategic attack. This will require a fundamentally different strategic force posture, both offensive and defensive, than the current force posture, which is almost entirely a holdover from the retaliation-based deterrence strategy of the Cold War. At this point, making specific force structure recommendations for U.S. strategic forces is not possible. It must await the conclusion of a new targeting directive that meets the needs of the “protect and defend” strategy. The companion NPR, therefore, should state that the President will issue a new strategic targeting directive in the course of 2009 and will instruct Strategic Command to take the lead in developing the subsequent targeting list and allocating strategic forces against that list. This should lead to a new strategic force structure that is appropriately sized and thoroughly modernized.

In the interim, the NPR should state that the existing U.S. strategic nuclear forces plan under the Moscow Treaty will remain in place. Regarding the defensive component of U.S. strategic forces, the NPR should state that the U.S. will maintain its air defense forces, initiate work on fielding cruise missile defenses, and continue expanding its ballistic missile defenses, subject to modification after the targeting directive and the targeting list are completed.

Air Force. The Air Force currently has 2,383 fighter and attack aircraft,³⁸ including the F-15, F-16, F-22, and A-10. (See Table 2.) The F-35 Lightning will soon enter service.

This overall size of the Air Force fighter force structure is about right. The QDR should recommend that the Air Force stay with this number. In

Current Air Force Fighters

Aircraft Type	Number of Aircraft
F-15	739
F-16	1,280
F-22	91
A-10 (excludes OA-10)	273
Total	2,383

Source: U.S. Air Force, “Factsheets,” Web site, at <http://www.af.mil/factsheets> (January 16, 2009).

Table 2 • B 2234  heritage.org

particular, it should clearly state that the number should not fall below the current size of the force. The QDR should also point out that this number is adequate only in the context of a commitment to modernize the Air Force’s fleet of aging aircraft.

Army. The Army plans to increase its force structure to 76 combat brigade teams across the Army, with 212 modular support brigades. The combat brigade teams will be broken down into 25 heavy brigades, 43 infantry brigades, seven Stryker brigades, and one brigade equivalent of active combat regiments. (See Table 3.) The airborne units will round out the broader Army force structure.

Planned Army Combat Brigade Teams

Brigade Type	Number of Brigades
Heavy	25
Infantry	43
Stryker	7
Active Combat Regiments	1
Total	76

Source: Andrew F. Krepinevich, “An Army at the Crossroads,” Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, 2008, pp. 49–50, at http://www.csbaonline.org/4Publications/PubLibrary/R.20081117.An_Army_At_The_Cro/R.20081117.An_Army_At_The_Cro.pdf (January 21, 2009).

Table 3 • B 2234  heritage.org

37. North American Aerospace Defense Command, Public Affairs Office, statement provided to the author, October 3, 2008.

38. A portion of these aircraft are dedicated to the strategic air defense mission.

The upcoming QDR should recommend continuing the Army plan to increase its overall force structure. However, it should state that this projected growth should be a cap. Expanding the Army beyond this level could jeopardize proper funding for other elements of U.S. conventional forces.

Marine Corps. Unique among the services, the Marine Corps force structure is established in law. The Marine Corps has three active Marine Expeditionary Forces (MEFs) and one in the reserves. Each MEF contains a division-equivalent ground force, an aviation wing, and a logistics group.

The QDR should make it clear that the Defense Department will not seek to change the relevant law. The three-MEF standard is appropriate for the Marines and should permit it to meet its combat responsibilities. As with the other services, this force structure number is dependent on appropriate levels of modernization.

Navy Ships and Aircraft. Shipbuilding was not a priority during the Clinton and Bush Administrations. Annual procurement has fallen to just 5.3 ships per year. A lack of funding and the increasing costs of ships under construction have combined to ensure a low rate of shipbuilding that cannot sustain the Navy's 30-year shipbuilding plan for a 313-ship fleet. In addition to the strategic ballistic missile submarines, the fleet includes aircraft carriers, cruisers, destroyers, littoral combat ships, amphibious ships, attack submarines, converted Trident submarines, and miscellaneous other ships. (See Table 4.)

The Navy's future force structure is the minimum size needed to secure U.S. maritime interests, but it lacks the proper internal balance and sufficient funding for the necessary shipbuilding rates. Specifically, it shortchanges aircraft carriers, cruisers, destroyers, and attack submarines in favor of littoral combat ships. The U.S. has 11 aircraft carriers, and that number should increase to 13 over the longer term. The number of cruisers and destroyers should increase from a projected 88 to 100, and the number of attack submarines should rise from 48 to at least 60. This should be facilitated, in part, by reducing the projected number of littoral combat ships from 55 to 20.

Planned Navy Fleet*

Type of Ship	Number of Ships
Aircraft Carriers	11–12
Amphibious Ships	31
Cruisers	20
Destroyers	64
Littoral Combat Ships	55
Attack Submarines	48
Converted Trident Submarines	4
Miscellaneous	66
Total	299–300

* Excludes 14 Trident ballistic missile submarines, which are included in Table 1 describing the strategic nuclear forces of the United States.

Source: Ronald O'Rourke, "Navy Force Structure and Shipbuilding Plans: Background and Issues for Congress," Congressional Research Service Report for Congress, updated October 2, 2008, at http://assets.opencrs.com/rpts/RL32665_20081002.pdf (January 15, 2009).

Table 4 • B 2234 heritage.org

Further, the QDR should at least consider recommending that the Navy proceed with DDG-1000 procurement instead of extending the construction of DDG-51 *Arleigh Burke* destroyers by ensuring that the DDG-1000s will have both air and ballistic missile defense capabilities. However, this approach will leave the cruisers with the Navy's primary air and missile defense missions. The QDR should also include a serious discussion of America's shipbuilding industrial base and how to maintain its strategic competitiveness throughout the next two decades.

Manpower

Maintaining military end strength—the number of soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines permitted by law—is the most expensive and most valuable element of America's military power when the cost of training and equipping them is included. The active-duty component of the military consists of fewer than 1.4 million persons, and the Reserve component has roughly 838,000 persons. (See Table 5.) Current plans will increase Army and Marine end strengths by almost 10,000 additional soldiers and more than 7,000 additional Marines.

Current Military End Strength Authorizations

Reserves	Numbers of Persons
Air National Guard	106,756
Air Reserve	67,400
Army National Guard	352,600
Army Reserve	205,000
Marine Corps Reserve	39,600
Navy Reserve	66,700
Total Reserve Component	838,056
Active Duty	Number of Persons
Air Force	317,050
Army	532,400
Marine Corps	194,000
Navy	325,300
Total Active Component	1,368,750
Grand Total	2,206,806

Source: Duncan Hunter National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2009, Public Law 110-417.

Table 5 • B 2234  heritage.org

The Air Force and Navy, by contrast, may seek additional reductions in manpower.

Current projections for military end strength are about right. However, the increases in Army and Marine end strengths should stop when the projected increases are achieved. The Air Force and the Navy may consider additional manpower reductions if their services' leadership believe that technological advances permit doing so.

However, given the considerable cost of compensating military personnel, all of the services need to find ways to slow the future per capita growth in military compensation. They can do this by continuing to pursue the "continuum of service" concept first proposed in the 2006 QDR. Specifically, it appears that military compensation is weighted in favor of deferred and in-kind benefits over cash compensation. In this context, the services should seek ways to limit the growth in these benefits, while continuing to extend pay raises.

Specifically, they should explore ways to convert defined-benefit family health care and retirement plans into defined-contribution plans. These changes should be implemented on a gradual basis.

Strategic Communications

While cross-cutting issues like public diplomacy and cyber security are best addressed primarily in the National Security Strategy, the 2006 QDR appropriately highlighted strategic communications while emphasizing that responsibility must be integrated horizontally on a government-wide basis. DOD leaders' and combatant commanders' understanding and operational application of strategic communications has matured markedly over the past three years. The Pentagon recently incorporated social scientists into its operation and decision-making process in a program known as Human Terrain Teams. These teams—trained in the customs and values of local populations—have helped to "map" the cultural terrain for soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan, contributing to the gains in Iraqi security in 2007 and 2008. Defense officials have also tasked regional combatant commands with coordinating individual strategic communications programs. For example, U.S. Southern Command has established the first Directorate of Strategic Communications.

While the Pentagon progress in creating a strategic communications strategy offers a hopeful glimpse of the way forward, various other civilian federal agencies need to make a greater effort to bolster and coordinate their efforts in this area. This is especially true if the Obama Administration wishes to avoid the claims that the U.S. is militarizing its foreign policy that would inevitably be levied against a strategic communications strategy that appears to be driven solely by DOD efforts. Following on the efforts of Southern Command, the next Quadrennial Defense Review should recommend expanding the strategic communication capabilities of all of the regional combatant commands. The strategy should place a high priority on identifying a common interagency definition for strategic communications. Public affairs, public diplomacy, international broadcasting, and information operations must be defined so that their implementers

understand their roles within the process to better advise and influence.

Funding Considerations

Future funding should not be based on a series of high-stakes bets. The military does not have the luxury of focusing solely on conventional and state actors at the expense of unconventional and non-state threats. The U.S. military needs to have not only the most capable equipment, but also a sufficient number of weapons systems and suppliers to meet national security requirements.

Avoiding budget spikes provides more than platforms; it provides stability in defense planning and offers a steadier workload for those constructing them. When budget requests change so dramatically year to year—particularly when requirements stay the same—the industrial base cannot plan ahead, and this increases the cost of individual systems. The national security of the U.S. is best served by a competitive industrial base, and defense budget predictability will contribute to this effort.

As indicated in the beginning of this paper, the U.S. economy can afford to spend 4 percent of GDP on defense. However, fiscal policy cannot determine whether the U.S. should devote this share of GDP to defense. Only defense policy can answer this question. The 2009 QDR can and should answer this question in specific terms. A careful review of the recommendations in this paper, including the recommendation to maintain the basic building blocks of defense and the associated force structure and end strength, shows that devoting a minimum of 4 percent of GDP to the core defense program would properly fund the needs of the military. This projected funding of the core defense program consciously excludes the costs of larger-scale military operations. Such operations should be funded as they arise through supplemental appropriations.

Coordinating with Capitol Hill

Within the DOD, the process is often focused on the interagency, but the QDR leaves Capitol Hill entirely out of the process until a final document is published. The QDR process should include Members of Congress early in the process to avoid irrelevance once the report is completed and to build movement toward consensus.

Providing for the common defense is an unending constitutional requirement and a basic function of the federal government. As a result, there should be considerable continuity in the broader defense program from year to year, Congress to Congress, and Administration to Administration. The 2009 Quadrennial Defense Review does not need to be a radical departure from current Defense Department plans. Instead, it should seek to ensure that the military means for securing the nation and its vital interests are sufficient to the ends of national security. If the Obama Administration establishes a National Security Strategy in keeping with America's tradition of leadership since the end of World War II and uses the Quadrennial Defense Review to keep America's military of sufficient size and strength to meet the needs of this strategy, then it will have done its duty by the Constitution, the American people, and the brave men and women who serve in uniform. George Washington, the man who often struggled with a reluctant Congress to build this nation's first army, would be proud to see this duty fulfilled.

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