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Army Forces for Homeland Security

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The Army has played a critical role historically in ensuring the nation’s security at home and can expect to be called on in the future to counter terrorist attacks and respond to other types of domestic emergencies. While the nation places primary and immediate responsibility for homeland security (HLS) with civilian organizations and the National Guard working for the state governors, the Army must be prepared to make up for any deficiencies.

The Army has taken a number of steps to improve its planning and capabilities for HLS, which is defined in this report to be activities in support of civilian organizations in domestic emergencies, including terrorist attacks, natural disasters, and civil disturbances.1

This report explores whether the Army should do more to hedge against the risks of being inadequately prepared for HLS tasks, given a world where terrorists have demonstrated the willingness and capability to conduct mass-casualty attacks within the United States and where the capabilities of civilian law enforcement agencies and emergency responders are expanding but still untested.

To do this, we designed a hybrid approach to dealing with HLS’s uncertainties and the Army’s requirements—one that focuses on possibilities against which the Army might wish to hedge. The possibilities were based on different assumptions about the character-

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1 Our definition encompasses what the Department of Defense calls Civil Support missions: Military Assistance to Civil Authorities (MACA), Military Assistance for Civil Disturbances (MACDIS), and Military Support to Civilian Law Enforcement Agencies (MSCLEA). See DoD (2004).
istics and seriousness of the terrorist threat, the adequacy of the capabilities of civilian organizations, and the nature of competing demands on Army forces overseas. The possibilities are theoretical, and in no way are we suggesting that they will happen. Rather, we suggest that they are plausible and could result in serious risks to the nation if they were to occur.

The approach goes on to define ways in which the Army could prepare today, by conducting more-specialized training, by improving its responsiveness, and/or by augmenting certain types of its capabilities. Table S.1 describes the five theoretical possibilities we explored and illustrative Army responses. Figure S.1 describes the HLS benefits of each of the Army responses.

Obviously, the Army would take such steps—if they were cost-free. But this is not the case. All of the potential Army responses involve costs, including the costs of raising or not raising the Army’s

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Possibility</th>
<th>Illustrative Army Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Guard is not adequately prepared, because of focus on conventional wars</td>
<td>Improve National Guard’s HLS capabilities by providing DoD Title 32 funding and improved sharing of state assets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active-duty component (AC) is not available quickly enough or adequately trained to respond to large-scale domestic emergencies</td>
<td>Dedicate brigade for rapid reaction, rotating between AC and National Guard (3,600 soldiers)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law enforcement combined with available Army counterterrorism capabilities cannot meet demands of future terrorist attacks</td>
<td>Create rapidly deployable and dedicated AC combating terrorism force (6,200 soldiers)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC cannot respond adequately to large-scale domestic emergencies, because significant numbers are deployed overseas</td>
<td>Give National Guard primary responsibility for HLS activities by creating dedicated rapid-response regional civil support battalions (8,900 soldiers)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Units critical for HLS in U.S. Army Reserve (USAR) are not available because they are deployed overseas, not ready quickly enough, and prohibited by statute from conducting all missions</td>
<td>Dedicate pool of USAR units to exclusive HLS mission (7,560 soldiers)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
manpower caps, the costs to the Army’s other missions, financial costs, and costs in the form of provoking political resistance (see Table S.2). Financial costs would be higher than Table S.2 suggests if the Army’s manpower caps were raised.

What emerges from our analysis is that adopting any steps to improve the Army’s HLS capabilities would result in certain costs

**Figure S.1**
HLS Benefits of Army Responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>HLS units are...</th>
<th>AC Overseas Readiness</th>
<th>Force Structure</th>
<th>Planning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>More responsive</td>
<td>Available</td>
<td>Specially trained</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Army National Guard Training</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC/Army National Guard HLS Ready Brigade</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC/Combating Terrorism Force</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Army National Guard Primary HLS Responsibility</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedicate Rapid USAR Units</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table S.2
Estimated Costs of Illustrative Army Responses ($ Millions)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Army Response</th>
<th>Startup Costs</th>
<th>Annual Costs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Army National Guard Training</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC/Army National Guard HLS Ready Brigade</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combating Terrorism Force</td>
<td>1,000 to 1,400</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Army National Guard Primary HLS Responsibility</td>
<td>400 to 600</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedicate Rapid USAR Units</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE: Assumes no changes in Army end strength.
today, with only the promise of benefits in the future were any of these HLS possibilities actually to arise. Without being able to predict the future, the choice for the nation then is what kinds of HLS risks it is willing to assume and whether to undertake a hedging strategy.

Based on our analysis, a multifaceted hedging strategy on the part of the Army could make sense.

• First, given the National Guard’s responsibility and availability to respond to domestic emergencies, the Army should support legislation that would make it possible for the Department of Defense (DoD) to fund HLS activities and for the National Guard to share its resources more easily across state borders. The Army should also seek the necessary statutory changes so that the USAR can conduct all HLS missions, including responses to natural disasters.

• Second, given the possibility that units in all components of the Army may be unavailable because of deployments overseas and the need already acknowledged by DoD for units in all of the Army’s components to be ready and on alert, the Army should take the additional step of dedicating some forces to HLS emergencies, making them ready for rapid deployment and ensuring that they are appropriately trained.

• Third, because the prospective capabilities and deficiencies of civilian organizations are so uncertain, the Army should hedge again by dedicating a mix of forces for HLS with some units trained in specialized law enforcement capabilities.

• Fourth, the dedicated units should be drawn from the National Guard to permit the active-duty Army and supporting USAR units to be available for deployments overseas and to capitalize on the Guard’s historical experiences in domestic emergencies and links to state and local emergency responders. To be effective as a hedge, the National Guard would need to create standing regional HLS task forces across the country, with units dedicated and trained for HLS and with capabilities for rapid response.
What is needed is for the nation to decide that it is worth bearing the costs today that are associated with the Army becoming better prepared for HLS than it presently is (in the aftermath of September 11) in order to hedge against a future that is uncertain, but one that could involve serious risks if the Army were found unprepared.