

From: [Al Bunting](#)
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Subject: UPDATE: 3/27
Date: Wednesday, March 27, 2013 8:29:59 AM

Top:

[Clarke Outlines Top Air Guard Priorities](#)

[Pentagon Hopes To Reduce Furlough Days](#)

(GovExec.com) - Pentagon Press Secretary George Little told reporters Tuesday that the Defense Department was hoping to reduce the number of furlough days required under across-the-board budget cuts from sequestration.

[F-35 Fighter Transforming Defense Industry, Says Retiring Chief](#)

(Reuters.com) - The retiring chief of the trouble-plagued F-35 Joint Strike Fighter says he remains bullish about the hi-tech war plane, with costs soon to be further reduced as production takes off, and believes the program will transform the aerospace industry.

*Unlike the Air Force, which has [already begun shifting](#) to a state of tired readiness, the Marine Corps will accept nothing less than a fully capable and ready force, said Maj. Gen. Kenneth McKenzie, USMC representative to the Quadrennial Defense Review. Speaking during a meeting with defense reporters in Washington, D.C., on March 26, McKenzie said the Marine Corps "values readiness above all other things" and "does not accept the concept of tiered readiness." However, tiered readiness may be acceptable for other services, he said. "We think it's an important discussion to have across the Department of Defense. In fact, it might be something that might be useful for the QDR as a whole to examine, but the Marine Corps is going to be a ready force," he said. McKenzie said he expects the Marine Corps to reduce its end strength from a war-time high of 202,000 to 182,000. He noted, however, that marines might be willing to negotiate that end strength if maintaining it negatively impacted readiness.

—*Amy McCullough*

[Military Needs DOMA Repeal](#)

(Philadelphia Inquirer) - However, until the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) is repealed, the peace of mind for members of our armed forces that undergirds military readiness cannot be enjoyed by all military families equitably

[U.S. Army Learns Hard Lessons in N. Korea-like War Game](#)

WASHINGTON — It took 56 days for the U.S. to flow two divisions' worth of soldiers into the failed nuclear-armed state of "North Brownland" and as many as 90,000 troops to deal with the country's nuclear stockpiles, a major U.S. Army war game concluded this winter.

[... more](#)

AF leaders, Congress at odds over BRAC

Facing extreme pressure to squeeze the budget, Congress has vowed to block the Air Force from cutting one area service officials have said is necessary: bases. [[Read More](#)]

[Senators Introduce 'Cyber Guards' Bill](#)

[Veteran-Status Legislation Reintroduced](#)

[Furlough Notices Temporarily Rescinded](#)

[Nearly 3,000 Employers Nominated for Award](#)

- **U.S. signs deal to help defend South Korea from possible attack**

The U.S. has agreed to provide support for South Korea in the event of an attack or "provocation" by North Korea. A statement released by the U.S. offered few details about what would constitute a provocation, but one South Korean official cited a 2010 shelling of Yeonpyeong Island by North Korea. [Stars and Stripes](#) (3/24)

Navy carriers have outlived their usefulness, critics say

Some military officers are raising criticisms about Navy aircraft carriers, calling them too expensive and unwieldy in the face of sophisticated enemy weapons. "After 100 years, the carrier is rapidly approaching the end of its useful strategic life," wrote Capt. Henry Hendrix in a report published this month by the Center for a New American Security. Former Pentagon chief Robert Gates has warned that the carriers are vulnerable to anti-ship missiles and other foreign weapons. [Defense News/Agence France-Presse](#) (3/24)

- **States hire consultant to help keep military bases open**

Virginia has joined Alabama and Florida in hiring the Spectrum Group to help analyze military assets ahead of a possible round of base realignments and closures. Spectrum will compile closure-risk assessments for each of Virginia's military bases. Officials say confidentiality agreements will prevent conflicts of interest involving Spectrum and various states. [The Virginian-Pilot \(Norfolk\)](#) (3/25)

Officers much happier than enlisted members

Enlisted service members are significantly less happy than officers with their pay, leaders, promotion fairness and quality of life, according to the latest annual Military Times Poll.

Responses from more than 2,100 active-duty troops and mobilized reservists show an enlisted force with a distinctly more pessimistic outlook than the officer corps: [[Read More](#)]

Hagel, Russian Counterpart Discuss Mutual Security Issues

03/26/2013 08:22 AM CDT

With Some New Flexibility, Officials Reassess Spending Cuts

03/26/2013 02:38 PM CDT

Traumatic Brain Injury Treatment, Research Pay Off

03/26/2013 04:45 PM CDT

N. Korea puts forces at top combat posture

SEOUL, South Korea — North Korea's military warned Tuesday that its artillery and rocket forces are at their highest-level combat posture in the latest in a string of bellicose threats aimed at South Korea and the United States.

The announcement came as South Koreans marked the third anniversary of the sinking of a warship in which 46 South Korean sailors died. Seoul says the ship was hit by a North Korean torpedo, while the North denies involvement. [[Read More](#)]

U.S. eyes action against West African pirates

WASHINGTON — The U.S. and some of its allies are considering plans to increase anti-piracy operations along Africa's west coast, spurred on by concerns that money from the attacks is funding a Nigerian-based insurgent group that is linked to one of al-Qaida's most dangerous affiliates.

Piracy in the Gulf of Guinea has escalated over the past year, and senior U.S. defense and counter-piracy officials say allied leaders are weighing whether beefed up enforcement efforts that worked against pirates off the Somalia coast might also be needed in the waters off Nigeria. [[Read More](#)]

Report: Pentagon must do more to stop assaults

WASHINGTON — A new report required by Congress recommends that the Department of Defense assess how well commanding officers handle sexual assault and harassment complaints when reviewing their job performance.

The Institute of Medicine said in the report released Tuesday that military sexual assault appears to be an important factor in the development of post-traumatic stress disorder. It cited previous research indicating that female veterans with a reported history of military sexual trauma were nine times more likely to have PTSD compared to other female veterans. [[Read More](#)]

SpaceX Dragon cargo ship splashes into Pacific

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. — The SpaceX Dragon capsule returned to Earth on Tuesday with a full science load from the International Space Station — and a bunch of well-used children's Legos. [[Read More](#)]

Readjustment issues affect 44% of combat vets

Nearly half of the 2.4 million Americans who deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan have problems readjusting to life at home — troubles compounded by a lack of understanding on the part of the Defense and Veterans Affairs departments, a new government report concludes. [[Read More](#)]

Air Force hits fuel-savings goal 3 years early

The Air Force has reduced its fuel consumption by 12 percent since 2006, three years ahead of schedule, the service announced March 21. [[Read More](#)]

Judge rules Army 1-star to have single trial

FAYETTEVILLE, N.C. — A judge has decided that just one jury will hear all charges against an Army general charged with sexual misconduct. [[Read More](#)]

U.S. training Syrians fighters in Jordan

WASHINGTON — The United States is training secular Syrian fighters in Jordan in a bid to bolster forces battling President Bashar Assad's regime and stem the influence of Islamist radicals among the country's persistently splintered opposition, American and foreign officials said. [[Read More](#)]

DoD reviews 900 suicide-prevention initiatives

Space chief: Cuts limit tracking orbiting junk

- **Despite furloughs, feds still posting job ads**

The federal government this month posted 4,600 job listings on USAJobs over a one-week period, despite thousands of workers facing furloughs. "One thing for sure about hiring freezes: They always begin to melt as soon as they are put into place. Does anyone want to land at a major airport that doesn't have an air traffic controller?" said Don Kettl, dean of the University of Maryland School of Public Policy. [The Baltimore Sun](#) (3/23)

13 non-active-duty reservists died in suspected suicides last month

[Army Times](#) (3/22)

- **U.S. forces in Europe can expect changes, commander says**

The end of combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan means the U.S. can end combat rotations for troops stationed in Europe and focus on training with other NATO members, says Lt. Gen. Donald Campbell, head of U.S. Army Europe Command. The U.S. is in the process of reducing its force size in Europe from 40,000 troops to 30,000. [ABC News/The Associated Press](#) (3/25)

North Korea threatens Hawaii, U.S. mainland

[The New York Times](#) (tiered subscription model) (3/26)

- **Congress resists Air Force BRAC proposals**

Air Force proposals to reduce base infrastructure are meeting pushback from Congress, as some lawmakers have promised to block any new rounds of base realignment and closure. "We continue to believe [base realignment and closure] authority is a tool that we urgently need," Air Force Secretary Michael Donley said last month. [Air Force Times \(free registration\)](#) (3/25)

- **Military hopes women can help fill ranks**

The military's decision to make combat positions available to women was as much about filling gaps in its ranks as it was about equality, according to this article. "It's fairly

common knowledge that our population of military-age young men, who qualify for the military, is declining," said Gen. Martin Dempsey, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Less than a quarter of young people meet the standards for military enlistment. [National Public Radio](#) (3/25)

- [Study finds brain abnormalities in Gulf War veterans](#)

Findings from a recent brain-imaging study suggest that Gulf War syndrome is a physical rather than psychosomatic condition and therefore should be treated with medications instead of counseling. Whistle-blowers have accused the Department of Veterans Affairs of manipulating research data in the past in order to support the theory that the disorder is psychosomatic. [The Washington Post](#) (3/25)

- [VA policy denies due-process rights, judge rules](#)

A federal judge has ordered the Department of Veterans Affairs to end a policy that he says denies due-process rights to veterans seeking benefits. The policy in question bars veterans from receiving VA assistance in appealing claims, except in the region where the claim was originally filed. [Sun-Sentinel \(Fort Lauderdale, Fla.\)](#) (3/25)

[North Korean Threats Help No One, Pentagon Official Says](#)

03/26/2013 02:09 PM CDT

[National Guard Director: Guard accessible, capable, ready, great value to America](#)

United States Army (press release)

Staff Sgt. Mangnan Tan, a medic from Lubbock, Texas, with Security Force Assistance Team 10, Texas Army **National Guard**, treats a child who approached his unit near an area known as the "Jungle" during Operation Southern Fist III, March 6, 2013, in the ...

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- [Naval Museum Opens Exhibit](#)
- [DoD Pilots Healthy Living Programs](#)

[Opportunity is what you make of it, say female **Guard** members](#)

DVIDS

Challenges are not the same as limitations, according to three Wisconsin **National Guard** females — two officers and one enlisted — who shared the varied experiences of their military careers as part of a Women's History Month observance, March 21, ...

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[National Guard Kicks Off 'Joining Community Forces'](#)

Bay Net

Army Brig. Gen. Marianne Watson, director of manpower and personnel at the **National Guard** Bureau, signs the agreement between the bureau and the Corporation for National Community Service, March 13, 2013, in Wilmington, Del., for the National ...

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[Bill to tackle sexual assault in Louisiana National Guard](#)

NOLA.com

As sexual assault in the military recaptures national headlines this month, a Louisiana lawmaker has filed a bill to better define the issue in the laws that govern the state's **National Guard**. Better definition of what constitutes a sexual crime would ...

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[Air National Guard Band's upcoming Conyers concert could be its last](#)

Rockdale Citizen

The Air **National Guard** Band of the South -- Sound Barrier, shown here playing on River Street in Savannah, Ga., is set to visit Conyers on March 30. photo. The Air **National Guard** Band of the South's performance on March 30 at the Rockdale Auditorium in ...

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Airmen with the Michigan Air National Guard's 127th Wing at Selfridge, northeast of Detroit, have concluded ground testing a prototype version of Northrop Grumman's Large Aircraft Infrared Countermeasures system called Guardian on a KC-135 tanker, according to a unit release. Next up is flight testing Guardian on this KC-135, which is assigned to the wing's 171st Air Refueling Squadron; this phase of testing is expected to conclude by early summer, states the release. In January, members of Selfridge's 191st Maintenance Squadron led an Air Force-industry team that began [integrating Guardian](#) on the KC-135's rear portion. "Our airmen are really focused on this project, [as] it has the potential to directly save the lives of not only our own airmen, but any soldier, sailor, or marine who is onboard" one of the airplanes, said CMSgt. Henry Ryan, 191st MXS superintendent, in the March 21 release. Guardian is designed to protect aircraft from shoulder-fired anti-aircraft missiles by jamming the incoming missile's guidance system using a laser beam. The Air Force has not finalized plans for how many of its more than 400 KC-135s it will equip with the upgrade. (Selfridge [report](#) by TSgt. Dan Heaton)

*Marine Corps Representative to the Quadrennial Defense Review Maj. Gen. Kenneth McKenzie said US Cyber Command could become the next unified command much like US Transportation Command and US Strategic Command. "Cyber is here and it's only going to grow," said McKenzie during a Tuesday meeting with defense reporters in Washington, D.C. As such, the Marine Corps intends to allocate more resources to building Marine Forces Cyber Command—the Marine Corps component of CYBERCOM, which is based at Fort Meade, Md. Currently there are several hundred marines assigned to MARFORCYBER, he said. "We're going to fully embrace [cyber] as we go forward. If you don't embrace it, you are going to get killed by it," said McKenzie. Each service will need to have the capability to defend its networks and possibly conduct cyber operations, he said. Because cyber is a Title 10 capability—meaning the Pentagon has authority for cyber operations under the US Code—the marines want that capability inherent in the Corps, he said. "Because of its importance, we're going to want to maintain a degree of control," said McKenzie during the March 26 meeting.

—**Amy McCullough**

*B-2 bomber officials this month marked the anniversaries of three combat engagements by the stealth

bomber fleet, according to a release from Whiteman AFB, Mo., home of combat-ready B-2s. On March 22, 2011, three B-2s took off from Whiteman and flew thousands of miles to Libya where they bombed hardened aircraft shelters near Sirte in the opening days of Operation Odyssey Dawn, resulting in the near-complete destruction of the air force of then Libyan dictator Muammar Qaddafi, states the release. Eight years earlier, on March 20, 2003, B-2s operating from Whiteman and forward locations struck high-value targets in Baghdad during the opening salvos of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Four years prior to that, on March 14, 1999, B-2s became the first manned aircraft to attack targets in then-Yugoslavia during Operation Allied Force. "Our people deserve to be proud of the outstanding missions they contributed to in each of these conflicts," said [Brig. Gen. Thomas Bussiere](#), commander of Whiteman's 509th Bomb Wing. (Whiteman [report](#) by Capt. John Severns) (See also [Bombers over Libya](#) and [Witch Stealth in the Balkans](#) from Air Force Magazine's archives.)

*Members of the New York Air National Guard's 109th Airlift Wing returned home to Scotia, concluding the unit's annual support of US scientific research on Antarctica, according to a wing [release](#). Ski-equipped LC-130 Skibirds from the wing [deployed to Antarctica](#) in October and the last of the unit's airmen arrived back home on March 21, states the release.

*China will buy 24 Su-35BM Super Flanker fighters from Russia in a deal worth about \$1.5 billion, according to press reports. However, there was still conflicting information, as of March 26, whether the Russian government had officially acknowledged the transaction. The deal would reportedly be the first major arms agreement between the two countries in about a decade and would include four Lada-class diesel electric submarines. The two nations reportedly struck the Su-35 deal last November, but they didn't hash out the details until last week's state visit to Moscow by China's new president, Xi Jinping. According to press reports, Russia wanted to sell 48 of the fighters—which represent the apex of development of the Su-27 Flanker series—but China would only buy half that number. Both countries are buying the Su-35 as a bridge until their respective fifth generation stealthy designs reach initial service. The deal was a long time in coming because Russia remains irate that China purchased Su-27s and back-engineered them to produce the J-11 knockoff. Russia remains concerned that China, which needs an engine for its stealthy-looking J-20 fighter, would copy the Su-35's Saturn 117S powerplant, which also equips Russia's T-50 stealth fighter. Consequently, China has reportedly agreed to a less-comprehensive technology transfer package. The Lada sub is reportedly a new development of the Kilo class: much quieter and with the ability to remain submerged longer. (See also NPR [blog entry](#), AFP [report](#), BBC [report](#), and Focus Taiwan [report](#).)

[Panther educates on National Guard unemployment](#)

The State

The "Operation: Hire Our Guard" program begins with the IndyCar season-opener at St. Pete, where the Panther race team will host business leaders from Florida companies and **National Guard** leadership for a 45-minute presentation on the issue and the ...

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Admiral At Center Of Inquiry Is Censured By Navy

(New York Times) - The Navy on Monday officially disciplined the admiral who had commanded a carrier strike group until being abruptly removed from the position last fall while the vessels patrolled the North Arabian Sea.

. A Good Soldier

(Los Angeles Times) - Soldier, Megan P. Tatu has your back. And just about anything else you might need. The two-star Army Reserve general has just taken charge of the 79th Sustainment Support Command, the modern iteration of an Army logistics branch that is a year older than the Declaration of Independence.

Not Your Average Weather Guys In Special Operations

(Stars and Stripes) - As a newly minted special operator arriving on his first deployment to Afghanistan in 2010, Air Force Staff Sgt. Travis Sanford looked at the men who were now technically his peers and wondered how he'd measure up **Scientists: Feds Can't Keep Up With Ills From Decade Of Wars**

(USA Today) - The federal government is failing to keep pace with a torrent of ailments and issues generated by two wars for the more than 2 million Americans who served overseas since 9/11, according to a sweeping assessment by a panel of leading scientists.. **Marines Plan Teams For Crisis Response**

(Wall Street Journal) - The U.S. military is making plans to place Marine Corps special-operations teams aboard Navy ships in the Middle East and elsewhere, to serve as a rapid-reaction force that could respond to embassy attacks, hostage standoffs and other crises.

War Game Shows Challenges

(Defense News) - The Unified Quest war game conducted this year by Army planners posited the collapse of a nuclear-armed, xenophobic, criminal family regime that had lorded over a closed society and inconveniently lost control over its nukes as it fell. Army leaders stayed mum about the model for the game, but all indications and maps seen during the game at the Army War College point to North Korea.

North Korea Threatens Guam, Hawaii, Rest Of USA

(USA Today) - China may be reaching the point that it may have to take concrete steps to calm its ally North Korea, which on Tuesday threatened strikes targeting Guam, Hawaii and the U.S. mainland, analysts said.

North Korea Says It Will Cut Key Military Hotline

(Yahoo.com) - North Korea said Wednesday that it had cut off a key military hotline with South Korea that allows cross border travel to a jointly run industrial complex in the North, a move that ratchets up already high tension and possibly jeopardizes the last major symbol of inter-Korean cooperation.

. SC Soldiers' Families 'On Pins And Needles' After Death In Unit

(Columbia (SC) State) - With the return of 161 area National Guardsmen from Afghanistan expected within weeks, the death of an Indiana soldier who worked with those York County men and women has turned families from nervousness to outright anxiety.

Kerry Hears Afghan Fears From Women In Business

(New York Times) - The event, held in the secured confines of the American Embassy compound, was intended to demonstrate the progress that women have made in Afghanistan since the days of Taliban rule. But it also highlighted the women's apprehensions about the course their country will follow after 2014, when the government in Kabul is scheduled to take full responsibility for security in the country, and the American-led international presence will shrink.

US Takes N. Korea Threats 'Very Seriously': Pentagon

(Agence France-Presse) - The United States takes North Korea's latest threats to strike targets on the US mainland, Hawaii and Guam "very seriously," Pentagon spokesman George Little said Tuesday.

. China Wages Stealth War In Asian Waters

(Los Angeles Times) - A host of Chinese agencies with innocuous titles -- the Maritime Safety Administration, the Fisheries Law Enforcement Command, the State Oceanic Administration -- have become stealth warriors in Beijing's campaign to press its territorial claims in Asian waters.

Report: Grade Officers On Handling Of Assault Cases

(Washington Post) - A new report required by Congress recommends that the Defense Department assess how well commanding officers handle sexual assault and harassment complaints when reviewing their job performance.

JBLM Using More Virtual Artillery Drills Due To Budget Deficit

(Tacoma News Tribune) - Capt. Chris Smith spent much of last week in a tent at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, practicing artillery drills to test his teams ability to pick targets and destroy them with Howitzer cannons and mobile rocket launchers.

. Assad's Foes Press U.S. For Patriot Arms

(Los Angeles Times) - On Tuesday, the White House reiterated that there was no intention to use the Patriots to target Syrian air power, which would make NATO a belligerent in the Syrian conflict.

Training Veterans For Their Next Mission

(Wall Street Journal) - Since 2001, two million men and women have completed tours of service in the U.S. military and returned to civilian life. An additional million will leave the armed forces over the next five years.

. Can The Marines Survive?

(ForeignPolicy.com) - If America's amphibious force doesn't adapt, it'll be dead in the water.

Heed Ronald Reagan On Missile Defense

(Politico.com) - The 30th anniversary of the SDI speech provides us with an opportunity to revisit those timeless national security concepts articulated by Reagan, assess the growing missile and nuclear proliferation risk to our national security and reinvigorate our efforts.

A New Government For Syria

(Washington Post) - Although there are no simple solutions to this sizable mess, something could be done, soon, to mitigate a bloodbath and perhaps avoid a Somalia-like failed state: The United States and its partners can support the mainstream Syrian opposition in establishing a legitimate, functioning government on liberated Syrian soil.

Caution, Curves Ahead

(New York Times) - There are mounting reports that the U.S. is getting more deeply involved in supporting the Syrian rebels trying to topple President Bashar al-Assad. There is a strong argument for everyone doing more to end the Syrian civil war before the Syrian state totally collapses and before its sectarian venom and refugees further destabilize Lebanon, Iraq and Jordan. But I hope that before President Obama gets more deeply involved in Syria, he gets satisfactory answers to the following questions:

. Pentagon Denies Training Syrian Rebels In Jordan

(DEFCON Hill (TheHill.com)) - The Pentagon on Tuesday vehemently denied reports that U.S. forces are providing training to Syrian rebels in Jordan.

. Obama Signs Bill To Avoid Government Shutdown

(Yahoo.com) - President Barack Obama has signed a stopgap spending bill to keep the government running through the end of September.

. **'Blue Water' Navy Veterans' Long Waits Often End In Denials At VA**

(McClatchy Newspapers (mcclatchydc.com)) - The VA grants benefits only to Agent Orange-exposed veterans who served on the ground or in the rivers of Vietnam. Bauman and his fellow sailors known as blue water Navy veterans served off the coast of Vietnam and aren't covered.

. **CIA Head Is Facing Quandary Over Post**

(Washington Post) - As John Brennan moved into the CIA director's office this month, another high-level transition was taking place down the hall.

. **Petraeus Raises Profile, Contrite But Confident**

(Los Angeles Times) - Signaling a desire to return to public life, retired Gen. David H. Petraeus offered an apology Tuesday for the scandal that led to his resignation as director of the CIA and brought an illustrious career to an abrupt end.

US Eyes Anti-Piracy Effort Along West Africa Coast

(Yahoo.com) - The U.S. and some of its allies are considering plans to increase anti-piracy operations along Africa's west coast, spurred on by concerns that money from the attacks is funding a Nigerian-based insurgent group that is linked to one of al-Qaida's most dangerous affiliates.

. **Inching Toward Syria**

(Los Angeles Times) - Military intervention in the Muslim world seems to bring the United States nothing but grief. Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya: None looks much like a success story now.

Gen. Musharraf Returns

(New York Times) - Gen. Pervez Musharraf has returned to Pakistan, proclaiming an intention to save his country. If there is anyone capable of saving Pakistan, he is not it.

Remembering Fallen Warriors -- (Letters)

(Los Angeles Times) - Thanks to Steve Lopez for highlighting the work of two wonderful Gold Star mothers who work in the name of their sons' service and ultimate sacrifice. The Iraq war may have ended the lives of Army Spc. Trevor A. Win'E and Army Spc. Justin W. Pollard, but they live on through the memories of their mothers.