Powering America’s Defense: Energy and the Risks to National Security

Admiral John Nathman, USN (ret)
Military Advisory Board Member

Background

April 2007: National Security and the Threat of Climate Change
www.SecurityandClimate.cna.org

www.PoweringAmericasDefense.org
CNA’s Military Advisory Board

- Gen. Chuck Wald, USAF (Ret.)
- Gen. Chuck Boyd, USAF (Ret.)
- Lt. Gen. Lawrence Farrell Jr., USAF (Ret.)
- Gen. Paul Kern, USA (Ret.)
- Gen. Ron Keys, USAF (Ret.)
- Adm. Joe Lopez, USN (Ret.)
- Gen. Bob Magnus, USMC (Ret.)
- Vice Adm. Denny McGinn, USN (Ret.)
- Adm. John Nathman, USN (Ret.)
- Rear Adm. Dave Oliver Jr., USN (Ret.)
- Gen. Gordon Sullivan, USA (Ret.)
- Vice Adm. Dick Truly, USN (Ret.)
- Sherri Goodman (Executive Director), General Counsel, CNA

Fundamental Questions:

- What are the **national security threats** associated with energy?
- What is an **appropriate role for DoD** in addressing these threats?
- The MAB’s debate led to: **findings and priorities**
Military Advisory Board

We never have 100% certainty.

If you wait until you have 100% certainty, something bad is going to happen on the battlefield.

That’s something we know.

Gen. Gordon Sullivan (Ret)
Former U.S. Army Chief of Staff

Finding 1: U.S. Energy Posture is a Threat

America’s energy posture constitutes a serious and urgent threat to national security—militarily, diplomatically and economically

- Oil dependence
- Weakness of U.S. electrical grid
U.S. Oil Dependence Undermines National Security

- **Weakens** international leverage
- **Jeopardizes** foreign policy
- **Exacts** huge price tag in dollars and lives
- **Entangles** US with hostile regimes
- **Undermines** economic stability

Dependence on Oil: Mission Impacts
Dependence on Oil: Drives Instability

- Interdependence issues with climate change
- Competition for resources

Grid a Dangerously Weak Link

Domestic electrical grid is outdated, fragile, and overtaxed—and a threat to military capability

- U.S. military bases vulnerable to deliberate or accidental incidents
  - Cyber weakness
  - Reach back
  - Training and readiness
Finding 2: Converging Risks

Continuing energy business as usual creates an unacceptably high threat level from a series of converging risks.

Finding 3: Commitment to Energy Security

Achieving energy security in a carbon-constrained world is possible, and requires concerted leadership and continuous commitment.
Finding 4: Strengthen Planning Processes

The national security planning processes have not been sufficiently responsive to the security impacts of our current energy posture

- Strategic planning
- Operational planning

Finding 5: DoD Must Lead the Way

DoD can contribute to national solutions as a technological innovator and early adopter
Recommendations: #1

Energy security and climate change goals should be clearly and fully integrated into our national security and military planning processes.

Recommendations

2. Design & deploy systems to the field to reduce the burden of inefficient energy usage
3. Know DoD’s Carbon Bootprint
4. Transform installations through aggressive pursuit of energy efficiency, smart grid technologies and electrification of non-tactical vehicle fleet
5. Expand distributed & renewable energy generation
6. Invest in long-term shift to low-carbon liquid fuels
Military Advisory Board

“This is America. We're pretty good at getting stuff done.

We need to get this one done.”

Suggested Websites

PoweringAmericasDefense.org

SecurityandClimate.cna.org
Powering America’s Defense: Energy and the Risks to National Security

Admiral John Nathman, USN (ret)
Military Advisory Board Member

Copyright © CNA 2009
All Rights Reserved