

National Guard study issued

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WASHINGTON -- The U.S. Army should create 10 National Guard task forces to respond quickly to domestic emergencies, a RAND Corp. report recommended Monday.

"We believe the best way to improve the Army's response to domestic disasters is to empower the National Guard for a regional focus," said Lynn Davis, lead author of the report from RAND, a non-profit research group. "The experience of Hurricane Katrina also demonstrates that new strategies are needed to prepare Army forces for all types for domestic emergencies."

As envisioned by the RAND report, each 900-member task force would be able to reach a disaster site in its multi-state region within 18 hours.

"There was plenty of warning before Katrina and the nation's response fell short for those stranded in the New Orleans Superdome and convention center, and in homes across Mississippi and Louisiana," Davis said. "There may be no warning before future domestic emergencies, particularly those that may be caused by terrorists."

The report also recommends giving the National Guard the federal mission of conducting homeland security activities.

The report was prepared for the Army.

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