

Army National Guard

On June 30th, 1950, five days after North Korea invaded South Korea, President Truman signed the Selective Service Extension Act. It continued the draft that had been in effect since 1948 and authorized the call-up of reserve component units for Federal service not to exceed 21 months (later 24 months).

While a small mobilization was planned at first, the disastrous setbacks of those first few weeks of the war made it apparent that a far larger number of Guard and Reserve units would be needed. In early September four National Guard Infantry Divisions were called to active duty - the 40th (California), 45th (Oklahoma), 28th (Pennsylvania) and 43d (Connecticut, Rhode Island, Vermont). The 40th and 45th would both see combat in Korea, while the 28th and 43d would be sent to Germany to help bolster NATO against the ever-present threat of Soviet invasion.

These four divisions were among the first of over 700 Army National Guard units (including four additional divisions) mobilized for the Korean War. The 138,600 Guardsmen called represented 37 % of the Army National. In addition to the 40th and 45th Infantry Divisions, 42 other Army Guard units were sent to Korea and thousands of individual Guardsmen went as replacements.

Most Guard units began arriving in Korea in early 1951, at the same time massive Chinese and North Korean attacks were pushing UN forces south. That spring, as UN forces regrouped and repulsed these massive attacks, three National Guard Artillery battalions, the 196th (Tennessee) the 937th (Arkansas) and the 300th (Wyoming), and a Transportation Company - the 252d Transportation Truck Company (Alabama)- won Presidential Unit Citations, the highest award that the Army can bestow upon a unit. A fifth Presidential Unit Citation was awarded to Pennsylvania's 176th Armored Field Artillery battalion for heroic action in June 1953; in addition, 18 Army National Guard units in Korea were recognized for their superior service with the Army's Meritorious Unit Commendation.

By the summer of 1951, UN forces were mounting successful limited attacks and peace negotiations had begun. Meanwhile, the 40th and 45th Divisions remained in Japan, where they had trained and served as the defensive garrison for the island since April 1951. The UN Commander, General Matthew Ridgeway, was reluctant to send these divisions to Korea, preferring instead to use their soldiers as individual replacements for units already there. Finally, under pressure from Congress and the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Ridgeway agreed in November 1951 to a "swap in place" of the two Guard divisions for two of his combat-worn divisions.

The following month Oklahoma's 45th Infantry Division switched places with the 1st Cavalry Division, and in January 1952 California's 40th Infantry Division switched places with the 24th Infantry Division. While the Guardsmen complained about the miserable condition of the vehicles and equipment they "inherited" from the units they replaced, the relative lull in combat brought on by the frigid Korean winter gave them time to make repairs before more active hostilities resumed in the spring.

By the spring of 1952, most of the Guardsmen who had been called up in the late summer of 1950 were nearing the end of their term of active Federal service, and began rotating home in the summer of 1952. While the Guardsmen went home, the Guard units - now filled with draftees and enlistees - continued on active duty, even after the war ended in July 1953. Not until 1957 was every unit Federalized for service in Korea returned to state control.

Army Guard Unit deployed to Korea

Unit	State	Arrived Overseas
30th Ordnance, HHD	NJ	21 Mar 51
32d Ordnance, HHD	IL	10 Jul 51
32d Quartermaster Group, HHD	PA	17 Feb 52
40th Infantry Division	CA	11 Jan 52
45th Infantry Division	OK	5 Dec 51
65th Infantry Regiment	**PR	23 Sep 50
101st Signal Battalion	NY	7 Apr 51
106th Ordnance (H) Maintenance Co	MO	26 Mar 51
107th Ordnance (M) Maintenance Co	MI	9 Mar 51

107th Transportation Truck Co	AL	8 Jan 51
116th Engineer Combat Battalion	ID	28 Feb 51
121st Transportation Truck Co	PA	4 Jan 51
131st Transportation Truck Co	PA	1 Jan 51
138th Engineer Pontoon Bridge Co	MS	16 Feb 51
145th Field Artillery Battalion	UT	5 Dec 51
151st Engineer Combat Battalion	AL	9 Feb 51
167th Transportation Truck Bn, HHD	FA	1 Jan 51
176th Armored Field Artillery En	PA	17 Feb 51
194th Engineer Combat Battalion	TN	16 Feb 51
196th Field Artillery Battalion	TN	9 Feb 51
204th Field Artillery Battalion	UT	2 Feb 51
213th AAA Gun Battalion	PA	11 Nov 51
213th Armored Field Artillery Bn	UT	16 Feb 51
217th Medical Collecting Company	AR	4 May 51
227th AAA Group, HHB	FL	21 Mar 52
231st Transportation Truck Bn, HHD	MD	1 Jan 51
235th Field Artillery Observation Bn	PA	10 Dec 52
252d Transportation Truck Co	AL	1 Jan 51
300th Armored Field Artillery Bn	WY	16 Feb 51
378th Engineer Combat Battalion	NC	24 Feb 51
568th Ordnance (H) Maintenance Co	TN	19 Mar 51
623d Field Artillery Battalion	KY	23 Dec 51
715th Transportation Truck Co	DC	5 Jan 51
726th Transportation Truck Co	MD	31 Dec 50
773d AAA Gun Battalion	NY	18 Oct 52
936th Field Artillery Battalion	AR	10 Feb 51
937th Field Artillery Battalion	AR	10 Feb 51
955th Field Artillery Battalion	NY	2 Feb 51
987th Armored Field Artillery En	OH	16 Feb 51
1092d Engineer Combat Battalion	WV	3 Mar 51
1169th Engineer Group HHC	AL	28 Feb 51
1343d Engineer Combat Battalion	AL	9 Feb 51
1437th Engineer Treadway Bridge Co	MI	2 Mar 51
2998th Engineer Treadway Bridge Co	TN	27 Feb 51

Key to abbreviations:

AAA = Anti-Aircraft Artillery; Ba = Battalion; Co Company; HHB = Headquarters and Headquarters Battery; HHC = Headquarters and Headquarters Company; HHD Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment; (H) = Heavy, (M) = Medium

**The 65th Infantry Regiment was part of the Regular Army from 1908 until 1959, when it was allotted to the Puerto Rican National Guard. However, the history of this regiment is in many ways more typical of a National Guard regiment than one from the Regular Army. First organized in 1899 as a Puerto Rican volunteer regiment, it was later transferred to the Regular Army. During its 50 years in the Regular Army it was continually stationed in Puerto Rico and the soldiers recruited solely from the local population.

Air National Guard

Korea was the Air National Guard's first war as a separate reserve component of the Air Force. In all, 486 units, including 22 of 27 Air National Guard Wings and 67 of 84 flying squadrons totaling 45,594 officers and men, were called to active Federal service between October 1950 and April 1951. This was approximately 80% of the Air Guard's total personnel strength.

Two wings, the 116th Fighter Bomber Wing (Georgia) and the 136th Fighter Bomber Wing (Texas) fought in Korea, entering combat in May 1951. Both wings had to transition from outdated aircraft to the F-84 Thunderjet before shipping off to war. The majority of the missions assigned to the F-84 in Korea were close air support of friendly ground troops and aerial interdiction of enemy troops and supplies behind the front lines. Three Air Guard wings deployed to Europe to reinforce NATO - the 117th (Alabama), 1 23rd (Kentucky) and 126th (Illinois).

Months before the two Air Guard wings entered combat in Korea, hundreds of individual guardsmen had shipped over to augment US Air Force units. Four Air Guard pilots became aces in USAF units flying F-86 Sabrejets. The two Guard wings also provided air defense for Japan.

The Air Force, which had little use for the Air Guard before the outbreak of the Korean War, was impressed by the performance it received from its citizen-airmen. Air Guardsmen flew 39,530 combat sorties, destroying 39 enemy aircraft and damaging another 149. The Air Force discovered that the Air Guard had a level experience and that paid big dividends in combat in Korea maturity - 40% of the men mobilized were veterans with two or more years of service during World War II. In fact, a Fifth Air Force survey conducted in 1951 showed that 80% of that unit's personnel were Reservists and Guardsmen recalled to active service.

Air National Guard Units to Deploy to Korea

Unit	State	Arrived Overseas
116th Fighter Bomber Wing	GA	July 51
136th Fighter Bomber Wing	TX	May 51
111th Fighter Bomber Squadron	TX	May 51
154th Fighter Bomber Squadron	AR	May 51
158th Fighter Bomber Squadron	GA	July 51
159th Fighter Bomber Squadron	FL	July 51
182d Fighter Bomber Squadron	TX	May 51
196th Fighter Bomber Squadron	CA	July 51