

Army National Guard MQ-1C Gray Eagle-25M Procurement



NGAUS

Fiscal Year 2026 Requirements for the Army National Guard



The Issue

The Army's Active Component currently operates the MQ-1C Gray Eagle within its ten Divisions while the Army National Guard does not. Recognizing the importance of this capability gap, Congress provided additive funding in FY23 to procure the first Gray Eagle company for the National Guard. It is critical that funding of additional Gray Eagle companies for the National Guard is continued to ensure the National Guard meets its role as the primary combat reserve of the Army, is in alignment with National Defense Strategy (NDS) for Army Divisions and is similar in force design to the Active Component.

◀ A General Atomics MQ-1C Gray Eagle in flight.

Background

The National Guard must continue to be concurrently and proportionally fielded with new equipment to increase interoperability with the Active Component, as recommended by the National Commission on the Future of the Army. This ensures Army National Guard Divisions are of like design and capability to the 10 Active Component Divisions. Similarity provides depth and ensures interoperability to the Total Force.

Having similar capabilities and force design to the Active Component ensures the National Guard can provide operational and strategic depth to meet Total Force demands. In addition, depth of this critical capability within the National Guard reduces wider operational and strategic risks and better supports global Combatant Commander requirements.

Although its primary focus remains the warfight, continued fielding of the Gray Eagle-25M within the National Guard provides greater capability for defending and securing the homeland. Army National Guard units could quickly integrate into US Northern Command (NORTHCOM) operations such as border security and provide additional support to the whole of Government including civilian authorities for domestic emergencies, disaster response, defense of critical infrastructure and other missions requiring persistent observation.

The Army National Guard continues to provide opportunity for transitioning Active Component Army personnel to continue their military service in a part-time capacity. Many highly trained Gray Eagle operators depart the Active Component after their service obligation is complete and the attrition rate remains high among UAS operators. The Army National Guard could capture separating service members and take advantage of their experience while allowing them to seek other career opportunities. Retention of these highly trained Soldiers, provides return on investment to the tax payer while adding depth and knowledge to the Army.

Recommendation

ARNG Continued Procurement



The National Guard Association of the United States (NGAUS) urges Congress to appropriate **\$1.05 billion** to support the continued procurement of MQ-1C Gray Eagle-25M across 3 additional Army National Guard Divisions.



Learn more at nga.us

NGAUS Contact **Jon "Ice" Eisberg**
VP OF GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS
jon.eisberg@nga.us

