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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

National Guard stands up two new units

BROOKINGS, S.D. – The South Dakota Army National Guard officially stood up two new units, the 139th Brigade Support Battalion (BSB) and the 115th Network Signal Company, during a ceremony last Saturday at the National Guard Armory in Brookings.

“The new units will provide additional capabilities to the state that will strengthen our homeland defense and help with emergency response,” said Maj. Gen. Michael Gorman, adjutant general.

Gorman said this new force structure is part of the Army National Guard’s efforts to move forward in its transformation to a more modular force structure.

In the past, the South Dakota National Guard served as a strategic reserve to the active component.

“Today, it is an operational force directly integrated into active component deployments and missions,” he said.

Transformation brought change in Brookings to the 88th Troop Command that deactivated and cased its unit flag. The flag, or colors, were cased in a formal ceremony during the activation of the 139th BSB and 115th Network Signal Company.

“This is an exciting time for us in the 139th BSB, and I feel we brought these new units in on a good note,” said Lt. Col. Thomas Croymans, former commander of the 88th Troop Command and now commander of the 139th.

The mission of the 139th BSB (68 personnel in the headquarters 554 total) is to serve as the organic logistical sustainment unit for the 196th Maneuver Enhancements Brigade that is headquartered in Sioux Falls. It will command the 115th Network Signal Company, Brookings (51 personnel); Company A, 139th BSB (Distribution), Watertown, Redfield, Miller, (119); Company B, 139th BSB (Support Maintenance) in Mitchell and Rapid City (157); and the 235th Military Police Company in Custer, Rapid City, and Sioux Falls (159).

The 115th Network Signal Company will provide tactical telephone, data, and internet services to the 196th MEB and 139th BSB during training and deployment.

The change in force structure will mean the full-time National Guard positions in Brookings will increase from 16 to 19 employees and a decrease in the traditional members from 162 to 119 National Guardsmen.

“This transformation is also going to create a lot more spaces in the National Guard, especially for women,” Gorman said.

Since the September 2001 terrorist attacks on America, the South Dakota National Guard has mobilized more than 2,900 Soldiers and 700 Airmen in support of the Global War on Terror.

Approximately 170 Soldiers and Airmen from the South Dakota National Guard remain on duty in Iraq and Afghanistan. More than 4,000 National Guardsmen are still serving in a non-active duty status in South Dakota and continue to provide support for state and national emergencies and homeland defense.