

RETAINING THE UNITED STATES ARMY'S RESERVE COMPONENT AS AN
OPERATIONAL FORCE

by
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Abstract

The United States Army's reserve component has transformed from a strategic force to a fully operational organization as the military efforts in the Global War on Terrorism have escalated. This transition came with significant costs and is particularly unsustainable as deployment opportunities continue to decline. This capstone provides historical context to this problem while quantitatively and qualitatively evaluating a proposal that would re-focus the Reserve's mission in an attempt to perpetually retain the present heightened level of readiness.

Advisor: Professor Paul Weinstein

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

FROM: Steven Davidson

SUBJECT: Retaining the U.S. Army's Reserve Component as an Operational Force

DATE: December 10, 2017

ACTION FORCING EVENT

The RAND Corporation published a study on June 12, 2017 titled, "Sustaining the Army's Reserve Components as an Operational Force".¹ This report outlined the Army's extensive utilization of the Reserve Component throughout the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) and asserted that maintaining the current level of capacity will require deliberate action by the Department of Defense (DOD).²

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The substantial use of the Army's reserve component (RC) at the onset of the GWOT resulted in the deployment of forces who were generally unprepared for the augmented role they would play in the war effort.³ This precipitated a high RC casualty rate and a reduced level of readiness across the enterprise, as attempts to rectify equipment

¹ Schnaubelt, Christopher, Raphael S. Cohen, Molly Dunigan, Gian Gentile, Jaime L. Hastings, Joshua Klimas, Jeff Marquis, Agnes Gereben Schaefer, Bonnie Triezenberg and Michelle Darrah Ziegler. Sustaining the Army's Reserve Components as an Operational Force. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2017. https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR1495.html.

² Ibid., iii.

³ "Death Toll Rises for Military Reservists." Military.com. October 11, 2005. Accessed September 15, 2017. <http://www.military.com/NewsContent/0,13319,78441,00.html>; Smith, R. Jeffrey. "U.S. Military Admits Major Mistakes in Iraq and Afghanistan." The Atlantic. June 11, 2012. Accessed September 15, 2017. <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2012/06/us-military-admits-major-mistakes-in-iraq-and-afghanistan/258339/>; Graham, Bradley. "National Guard Seeks \$20 Billion Over 3 Years for Arms, Gear." The Washington Post. December 17, 2004. Accessed September 15, 2017. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A5972-2004Dec16.html>; Gold, Scott. "Guardsmen Say They're Facing Iraq Ill-Trained." Los Angeles Times. November 25, 2004. Accessed September 15, 2017. <http://www.latimes.com/world/middleeast/la-na-guard25nov25-story.html>.

and personnel shortfalls left non-mobilized units incapacitated.⁴ Although improvements were made over the duration of the conflict, they were done through “muscle memory” and reactionary policies that attempted to solve immediate tactical problems with little attention to their broader strategic implications. As a result, there is no set plan to maintain this heightened level of capacity during peacetime and a myriad of policies sustaining the RC as an operational force during war.⁵ Failing to maintain the current level of capacity risks the recurrence of the problems seen at the initiation of the GWOT.

The aftermath of Al-Qaeda's September 11, 2001 attacks saw the beginning of GWOT and the commencement of two major conflicts.⁶ The first, Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), would be principally conducted in Afghanistan while the latter, Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), would occur solely within Iraq. In the first four years of GWOT, the RC would deploy 155,627 personnel, amounting to 35% of the Army's total deployments.⁷ By 2005, the fifth year of GWOT, and the second of OIF, the RC would account for 43% of the total casualties incurred by the Army.⁸

⁴Skelton. "Mortgaging the Future of the Military." Congressional Record, Volume 152 Issue 87 (Thursday, June 29, 2006). June 26, 2006. Accessed September 15, 2017. <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CREC-2006-06-29/html/CREC-2006-06-29-pt2-PgH4911.htm>.

⁵United States. Congress. House. *Second report to Congress by the Commission on the National Guard and Reserves*. Washington: U.S. G.P.O., 2008. 10.

⁶"Text: President Bush Addresses the Nation." The Washington Post. September 20, 2001. Accessed September 15, 2017. http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/nation/specials/attacked/transcripts/bushaddress_092001.html.

⁷Powers, Rod. "Deployment rates Iraq and Afghanistan." The Balance. Accessed September 15, 2017. <https://www.thebalance.com/deployment-rates-3356917>.

⁸Ozcan, Sezgin. *Casualty Profile of the United States Army in Afghanistan and Iraq*. Master's thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 2012. Monterey: Naval Postgraduate School, 2012.

	TOTAL ARMY CASUALITES	ARMY RESERVE	ARMY NATIONAL GUARD	ACTIVE DUTY ARMY	RC % OF TOTAL CASUALTIES	ARMY % OF TOTAL CASUALITES
2003	2411	294	286	1831	24%	84%
2004	5079	598	1051	3430	32%	56%
2005	4790	421	1677	2692	43%	68%

Figure 1: Breakdown of U.S. Army Casualties, 2003-2005

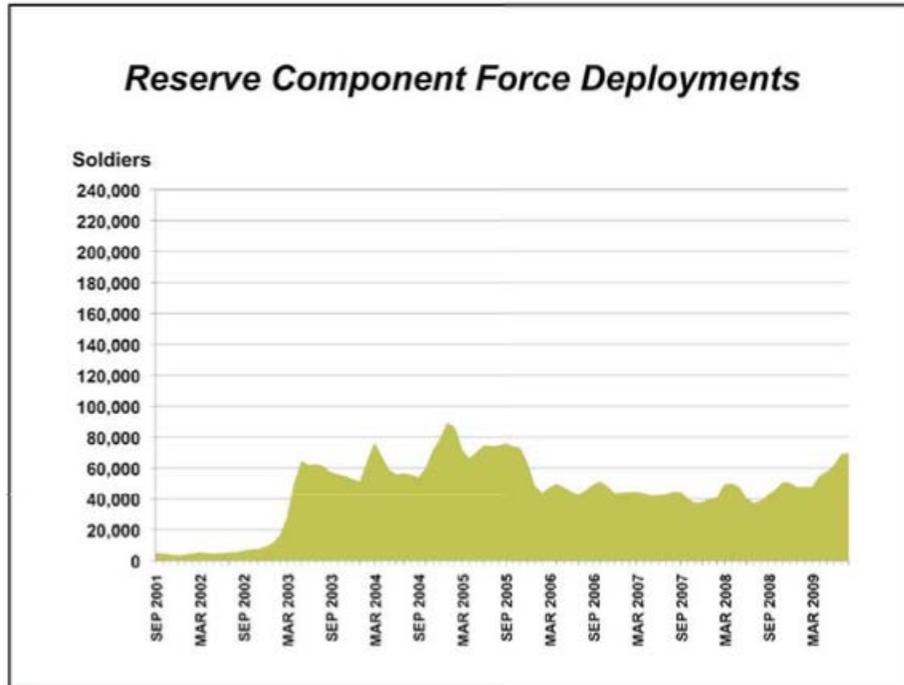
Data Accessed From: Ozcan, Sezgin. *Casualty Profile of the United States Army in Afghanistan and Iraq*. Master's thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 2012. Monterey: Naval Postgraduate School, 2012. ; United States. Department of Defense. Defense Manpower Data Center. Operations Iraqi Freedom Monthly Casualty Report, 2017. ; United States. Department of Defense. Defense Manpower Data Center. Operations Enduring Freedom Monthly Casualty Report, 2017.

This data becomes particularly compelling when balanced with the knowledge that the RC possesses a preponderance of personnel whose roles would typically place them out of range of daily engagement with the enemy. While the RC does comprise, “55% of the Army’s combat forces,” it is primarily a support organization with, “63% of the Army’s combat support units and 68% of its combat service support units.”⁹ Additionally, even though there are direct combat forces in the RC, they were not intended, “to deploy in the early days of a conflict, but to augment active duty units in the event of an extended conflict.”¹⁰

⁹Hargreaves, Robert. *An Army "Reserve Components Transformation" Strategy for the 21st Century*. Master's thesis, Army War College, 2001. Carlisle Barracks: U.S. Army War College, 2001.

¹⁰ *Reserve forces: Army National Guard's Role, Organization, and Equipment Need to be Reexamined*. GAO-06-170T. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Accountability Office. 9.

Figure 2: Reserve Component Force Deployments



Source: Bonds, Tim, Dave Baiocchi, and Laurie L. McDonald. *Army deployments to OIF and OEF*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Arroyo Center, 2010.

The high deployment of RC forces early in OIF exacerbated supply, logistical, and personnel problems already present in reserve units. For years, the DOD successfully employed a tiered resourcing strategy that placed an emphasis on AD forces. Under this program RC units would, “maintain fewer personnel and less equipment than they would need in the event of a deployment [and would] train at lower states of readiness with the expectation that there would be sufficient time to add the required personnel and equipment prior to a deployment.”¹¹ As a result of this program, RC units were only manned

¹¹ *Reserve forces: An Integrated Plan is Needed to Address Army Reserve Personnel and Equipment Shortages: Report to Congressional Committees*. GAO-05-660. Washington, D.C.: Government Accountability Office, 2005. 10.

and equipped at between 64% - 79% of their required deployment capacity.¹² With DOD requirements mandating that mobilized units, “must generally have at least 80 percent of [their] mission-essential equipment on hand”, the RC began extensively transferring items from non-mobilized units to their mobilized counterparts.¹³ By June 2005, the Army National Guard (one of the two subsets within the Army’s reserve component) had transferred, “more than 101,000 pieces of equipment,” to mobilized units for use overseas.¹⁴ During that same period, the United States Army Reserve (the second of the two subsets within the Army’s reserve component) stated that 45% of their deployed personnel had been transferred from non-mobilized units.¹⁵ These actions greatly reduced readiness as domestically located units lacked personnel to conduct training and possessed, “only about 34[%] of their essential warfighting equipment.”¹⁶

While the RC did eventually rectify these problems, producing a force capable of providing genuine strategic depth, it did so in a particularly unsustainable manner. More specifically, the primary issue preventing the continuation of the policies as they are, is budgetary.

What created today’s reserve was first, the ability to train more frequently, and second, the acquisition of better equipment. Both of these factors will be adversely affected as defense appropriations reduce in the post-war period.

¹²*Reserve forces: Army National Guard’s Role, Organization, and Equipment Need to be Reexamined.* GAO-06-170T. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Accountability Office.9.

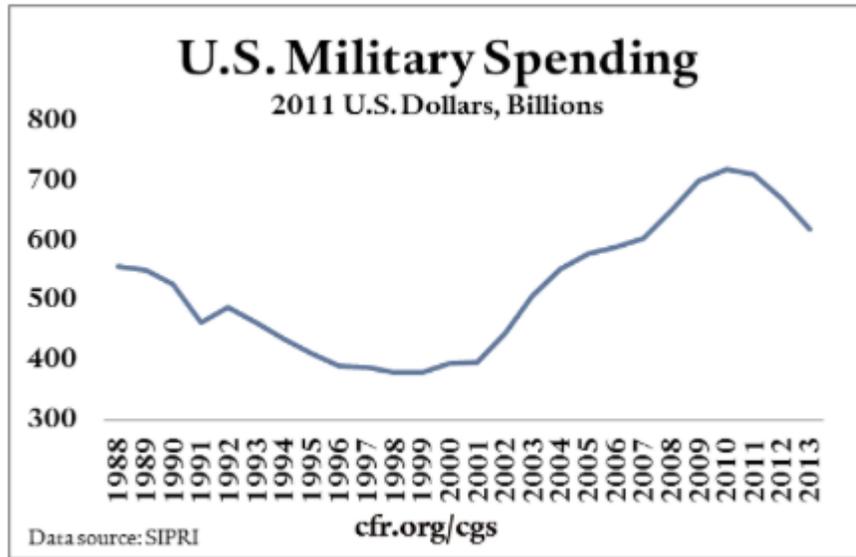
¹³ *Ibid.*,12.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Reserve forces: An Integrated Plan is Needed to Address Army Reserve Personnel and Equipment Shortages: Report to Congressional Committees.*, 11.

¹⁶ *Reserve forces: Army National Guard’s Role, Organization, and Equipment Need to be Reexamined.* 11.; Schnaubelt, Christopher, Raphael S. Cohen, Molly Dunigan, Gian Gentile, Jaime L. Hastings, Joshua Klimas, Jeff Marquis, Agnes Gereben Schaefer, Bonnie Triezenberg and Michelle Darrah Ziegler.79.

Figure 3: U.S. Military Spending



Source: "Trends in U.S. Military Spending." Council on Foreign Relations. Accessed September 18, 2017.
<https://www.cfr.org/report/trends-us-military-spending>.

The first factor, training, is the biggest impediment to a unit's readiness. As deployments became more consistent, so too did available funding and training opportunities. Over the past 16 years, reservists were frequently able to work in AD environments which allowed for the development of a much more proficient organization.¹⁷ These training opportunities came largely in support of overseas operations, and as the demand for such practical experience declines so too will the justification for extensive exercises. Without finding fiscally prudent manners to continue RC training, reservists will be forced to return to the service schedule of purely 39 days per year in uniform. This, in turn, will decrease the number of qualified personnel available for immediate deployment while increasing the amount of time needed for pre-deployment training.¹⁸

¹⁷Sustaining the Army's Reserve Components as an Operational Force. 89.

¹⁸Cox, Matthew. "Army Plans to Double Training Days for Guard Units, Chief Says." Military.com. December 15, 2015. Accessed September 15, 2017.

The second factor that aided in producing today's highly operational reserve are the improvements in the quantity and quality of equipment. This, similarly to the previous factor, will be difficult to preserve in peacetime as it is mainly a product of funding. By 2014, the aforementioned supply problems had been rectified as the two subsets of the RC reported having 93% and 80% of their necessary equipment on hand.¹⁹ This came with a steep financial burden and as a result of sharp increases in the National Guard and Reserve Equipment Appropriation (NGREA) budget. At that time, these were easily defensible as the need for equitable equipment became a politically charged issue in halls of Congress. Now, without a well-defined combat need, the argument for maintaining the NGREA budget at wartime levels is weakened. Without a clear reevaluation of the tiered resourcing model any unpredictable drop in funding will force the RC to return to an equipment model that will prohibit prompt deployment without disruptions to broader readiness.

HISTORY AND BACKGROUND

The Army's Reserve Component (RC) is comprised of the United States Army Reserve (AR), who report solely to the President of the United States (POTUS), and the Army National Guard (ARNG), who report both to their respective state's Governor and also to POTUS.²⁰ Unlike their AD counterparts, reservists serve in a part-time capacity

<http://www.military.com/daily-news/2015/12/14/army-plans-to-double-training-days-for-guard-units-chief-says.html>.

¹⁹ Schnaubelt, Christopher, Raphael S. Cohen, Molly Dunigan, Gian Gentile, Jaime L. Hastings, Joshua Klimas, Jeff Marquis, Agnes Gereben Schaefer, Bonnie Triezenberg and Michelle Darrah Ziegler. 76.

Army National Guard 93%, United States Army Reserves 80%.

²⁰"Understanding the Guard's Duty Status." National Guard Association of the United States. Accessed September 15, 2017. Understanding the Guard's Duty Status.

which historically had placed them on duty for only 39 days per year.²¹ The current force structure of the collective RC was created at a time when the US was still preparing for large-scale conventional war with the Soviet Union. Now, with burgeoning threats across the spectrum of warfare, the Army finds itself with 542,000 reservists who continue to operate within a structure that, “better represents [the Cold War] era than the present one.”²²

Over time, the RC has transformed. According to the official history of the AR, the 1990’s saw the conclusion of what had principally been a strategic reserve and the birth of what would become known as an operational reserve (OR).²³ This new model, came out of necessity rather than vision, and places an emphasis on ensuring genuine interoperability between the Army’s two components. Compared to a SR, an OR actively vies for usage in operations and maintains a higher level of readiness to ensure a shorter post-mobilization pre-deployment training period.

The modern day structure of the RC can trace its lineage to Secretary of Defense (SECDEF) Robert McNamara’s failed 1962 and 1964 attempts to consolidate the AR/ARNG into a single entity.²⁴ Prior to this point, these two organizations were almost identical which provided the Army a congressionally protected redundancy that proved

²¹Klimas, Joshua, Thomas F. Lippiatt, Laurie L. McDonald and Jerry Sollinger. *Paid Duty Days for Army Guardsmen and Reservists: A Comparison of Fiscal Year 2000 with Fiscal Years 2010 to 2013*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2017. https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR1409.html.

²²Korb, Lawrence J. "Fixing the Mix: How to Update the Army’s Reserves." *Foreign Affairs* 83, no. 2 (2004): 2. doi:10.2307/20033897.; FY17 114-328, 114 Cong. (2016) (enacted). ; End strength: total Army is 1,022,000 with 480,000 to be located on Active Duty (AD), 343,000 to be within the Army National Guard (ARNG), and the remaining 199,000 to belong to the United States Army Reserves (AR)

²³United States. Department of the Army. Office of the Army Reserve History. *Army Reserve; A Concise History*. Fort Bragg, NC: U.S Army, 2013.

²⁴United States. Library of Congress. Federal Research Division. *Historical Attempts to Reorganize the Reserve Component*. By Alice Buchalter and Seth Elan. Washington, DC: Library of Congress, 2007. 6-9.

difficult to overcome.²⁵ Eventually, on December 1, 1967, the Secretary was successful in enacting the Army Reserve Realignment policy (ARRP) which tasked the AR with the roles of combat support (CS) and combat service support (CSS) while allowing the ARNG to maintain both its combat and CS units.²⁶

Figure 4: Army Units By Classification

COMBAT	COMBAT SUPPORT	COMBAT SERVICE SUPPORT	
Infantry	Intelligence	Quartermaster	Chaplain
Armor	Communication	Ordnance	Engineering, Civil
Artillery	Chemical	Transportation	Adjutant General
Special Forces	Military Police	Medical	Civil Affairs
Aviation	Aviation	Legal	Postal
Engineering, Mobility & Survivability	Engineering, Mobility & Survivability	Finance	Maintenance

Data Source: Pike, John. "Military Units." FM 3-90 Appendix A Army Branches and Tactical Echelons. Accessed October 01, 2017. <https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/policy/army/fm/3-90/appa.htm>.

Six years later, the Pentagon would formalize the Total Force policy (TFP) with the objective of maintaining, “as small an active peacetime force as possible by placing greater reliance on reserve forces.”²⁷ This action came at a particularly turbulent period in US military history as the nation transitioned from the draft to an all-volunteer force while also conducting a drawdown of American troops in Southeast Asia.²⁸ With the TFP

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶"McNamara's Impact on Defense Policies Weighed." In *CQ Almanac 1967*, 23rd ed., 07-971-07-979. Washington, DC: Congressional Quarterly, 1968. <http://library.cqpress.com/cqalmanac/cqal67-1313238>.

²⁷Schuster, Carol, and Charles Bonanno. "Reserves and Readiness: Appraising the Total Force Policy." *The GAO Journal*, no. 13 (January 1, 1991): 24. Accessed September 20, 2017. <http://www.gao.gov/assets/200/195347.pdf>.

²⁸United States. NCFR Operation Subcommittee. *The Total Force Policy and Integration of Active and Reserve Units*. Washington, DC, 2015.

in mind, Army Chief of Staff, General Creighton Abrams produced the roundout strategy which eliminated one brigade in each AD division and assigned a comparable RC brigade to fill the void.²⁹ This allowed Abrams to avoid end-strength contention while providing the nation a suitable deterrent force. As this strategy took effect problems arose regarding the level and quality of equipment being issued to RC roundout units.³⁰ This led, in 1982, to the announcement of the first-to-fight policy (FTFP) which stated that, “units that fight first shall be equipped first, regardless of component.”³¹ While these policies brought the RC into the discussion as a viable and cost-efficient alternative to a large AD force, the roundout strategy and the FTFP made grave assumptions that became apparent as the US entered into Operation Desert Shield and Operation Desert Storm (ODS/S).

On August 22, 1990, twenty days after Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait, President George H.W. Bush initiated a, “slow, rolling call-up” of reserve forces.³² Although reservists would serve valiantly throughout the conflict, the RC combat roundout brigades would not leave the US despite the deployment of their parent divisions.³³ In fact, the utilization of reserve units generally excluded combat forces in favor of CS/CSS units.³⁴ This decision was problematic for two reasons. First, failing to use the reserve roundout

²⁹ Sullivan, Timothy. *The Abrams Doctrine: Is it Viable and Enduring in the 21st Century?* Master’s thesis, United States Army War College, 2005. Carlisle: U.S. Army War College, 2005. 3.

³⁰ Klimas, Joshua, Richard E. Darilek, Caroline Baxter, James Dryden, Thomas F. Lippiatt, Laurie L. McDonald, J Michael Polich, Jerry Sollinger and Stephen Watts. *Assessing the Army’s Active-Reserve Component Force Mix*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2014. https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR417-1.html. 36.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid, 40.

³³ Goldich, Robert. U.S. *The Army’s Roundout Concept After the Persian Gulf War*. Rept. Washington, DC: Library of Congress, 1991.2.

³⁴ Peter Applebome, Special To The New York Times. "Guardsmen Return From War They Didn’t Fight." The New York Times. March 26, 1991. Accessed October 02, 2017. <http://www.nytimes.com/1991/03/27/us/guardsmen-return-from-war-they-didn-t-fight.html?pagewanted=all>.

brigades invalidated the system that had been elevating the status and proficiency of the reserves.³⁵ Second, the FTFP had been financially favoring combat forces, which remained stateside, as opposed to CS/CSS units that were among the first to be deployed.³⁶ These issues placed a practical backdrop on the policies of the past three decades and forced the reconsideration of the RC's place in the military strategy of the US.³⁷

In December 1990, with the offensive actions of ODS/S about to commence, DOD recommended that in the future AD forces should plan to, "be able to deploy rapidly to trouble spots and to sustain themselves with virtually no support from the [RC]."³⁸ This announcement was followed by series of reviews which proposed and enacted reductions in reserve manpower.³⁹ Principal among the post-ODS/S policies that affected the RC was the 1993 Offsite Agreement.⁴⁰ This guidance affirmed the force structure outlined in the ARRP and declared that while reserve units would still be associated with AD divisions, it was solely for training purposes and that they should expect to deploy only as reinforcements and not until 90 days after the start of a conflict.⁴¹ This was a departure from the closely linked, and mutually deployable, AD/RC divisions planned for

³⁵ Klimas et al. 40.

³⁶ Schuster, Carol, and Charles Bonanno. 6.

³⁷ United States. Library of Congress. Federal Research Division. *Historical Attempts to Reorganize the Reserve Component*. By Alice Buchalter and Seth Elan. Washington, DC: Library of Congress, 2007. 19.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Office of the Assistant Secretary . Department of Defense. "Army Guard and Reserve Restructuring Planned." News release, December 10, 1993. Accessed September 22, 2017. <http://www.ncfa.ncr.gov/sites/default/files/1.%20OASD%20Press%20Release%20Offsite%20Agreement.pdf>, 1.

⁴¹ Ibid.

with the TFP. It is also all but a formal relegation of the reserves from what was once becoming an operational organization to a strategic, but alert institution.

Eight years later, in 2001 the US would initiate what would truly become a global war on terrorism. The relevance of GWOT to the Army's RC is tremendous as nothing has had a greater influence on the present force than this extended military action. As preparations for the invasion of Iraq commenced, defense planners began assigning international missions previously conducted by AD troops to RC responsibility. In 2002, the peacekeeping operations in Bosnia and Kosovo transitioned to reserve control.⁴² While there might have been initial questions surrounding the performance and professionalism of reserve peacekeepers, these concerns were quelled as the civilian leadership in each area reported a negligible difference.⁴³ The RC's ability to successfully conduct operations independent of AD forces demonstrated that they could, in fact, "function effectively in national-level operational roles."⁴⁴

By 2005, the RC was being heavily used throughout the GWOT. This, as discussed in the previous section, resulted in serious readiness and equipment problems. Recognizing the need to improve the responsiveness of their force, the RC altered their training paradigm of alert-mobilize-train to train-alert-deploy.⁴⁵ This seemingly minor

⁴²Greenhill, Jim. "Multinational Force Observers." National Guard. 2011. Accessed September 15, 2017. <http://www.nationalguard.mil/Features/2011/Multinational-Force-Observers/>; Beardsley, Steven. "Active Duty US Troops to do Kosovo Peacekeeping." Military.com. Accessed October 02, 2017. <http://www.military.com/daily-news/2013/03/14/active-duty-us-troops-to-do-kosovo-peacekeeping.html>.

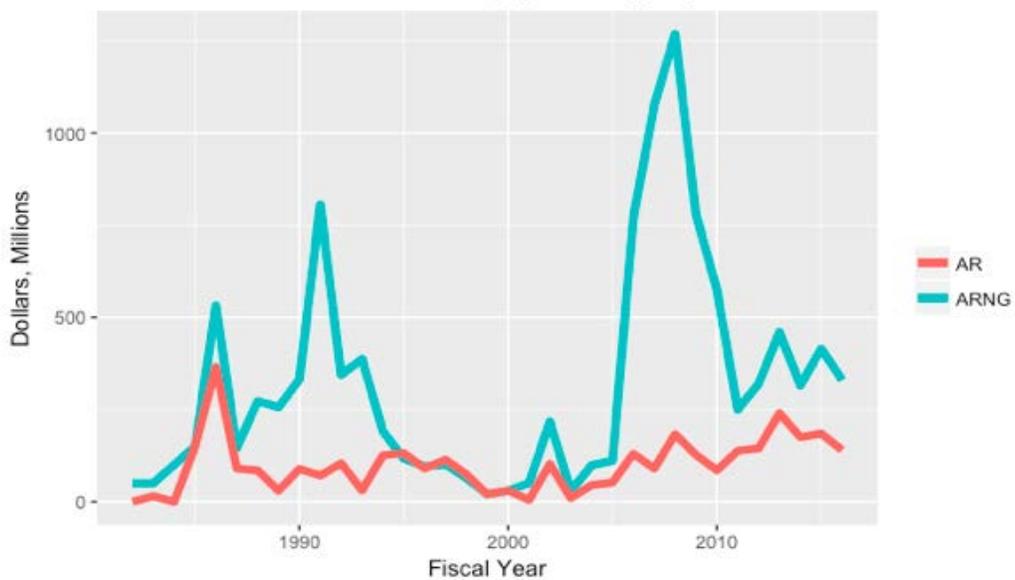
⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴Felhazi, Sandor. "A thumbnail sketch of a "live" peace operation: The Ohio National Guard in Kosovo." *AARMS* 8, no. 2 (2009). Accessed September 13, 2017. <http://www.zmne.hu/aarms/docs/Volume8/Issue2/pdf/01felh.pdf>.

⁴⁵Tillson, John. "Landpower and the Reserve Components." *Joint Forces Quarterly*, no. 36 (2004). Accessed September 10, 2017. doi:10.18411/d-2016-154.

change radically transformed the mindset of the force and effectively ended the expectations of a somewhat relaxed, “one weekend a month” of service. As the Army worked to improve readiness, the reserve’s equipment problems, already strained by overseas deployments, became exacerbated by Hurricane Katrina. When the hurricane made landfall in August 2005, the National Guards of Louisiana and Mississippi lacked the required equipment to immediately respond to the disaster.⁴⁶ Realizing that this problem was not isolated to coastal states, Congress substantially increased the NGREA to ensure the RC was appropriately resourced for both its overseas and domestic missions.

Figure 5: National Guard and Reserve Equipment Appropriations



Data Accessed From: "National Guard and Reserve Equipment Appropriation (NGREA) ." AcQuipedia. August 8, 2016. Accessed September 14, 2017. OSD’s ASD(R) (Readiness Programming and Resources)

⁴⁶ *Reserve forces: Army National Guard’s Role, Organization, and Equipment Need to be Reexamined.* GAO-06-170T. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Accountability Office. 16.

As equipment shortages were being resolved, the Army enacted two policies aimed at adding a degree of predictability to reserve usage. First, in 2005, the Army Force Generation process (ARFORGEN) announced that, “units would be manned, equipped, and trained based on where they were in a three-phase cyclical deployment model.”⁴⁷ Unlike the previous model which resourced units according to their likelihood of deploying first, this strategy assumed that units were always somewhere along the, training to deploy, ready to deploy, and deploying spectrum.⁴⁸ The second major adjustment came in 2007 with the announcement that mobilized reservists would remain on AD for no longer than one year; at which point, they would then become ineligible for involuntary redeployment for the next five years.⁴⁹ Despite giving RC commanders a better awareness of when their organizations would be utilized, the Army had still not committed itself to a long-term plan for the future of the reserves.⁵⁰

One year later, in 2008, the DOD published a directive titled, “Managing the Reserves as an Operational Force”.⁵¹ This initially affirms that the RC is an integrated part of the total force and then commits an inordinate amount of the document asserting that

⁴⁷ Schnaubelt et al. 34.

⁴⁸ Schnaubelt et al. 35.

⁴⁹ United States. Department of Defense. Office of the Secretary. *Utilization of the total force: memorandum for secretaries of the military departments, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Under Secretaries of Defense*. By Robert Michael Gates. Washington, D.C.: Secretary of Defense, 2007.

⁵⁰ “ARFORGEN: Army's deployment cycle aims for predictability.” [Www.army.mil](https://www.army.mil/article/30668/arfor_gen_armys_deployment_cycle_aims_for_predictability). Accessed October 02, 2017. https://www.army.mil/article/30668/arfor_gen_armys_deployment_cycle_aims_for_predictability.

⁵¹ United States. Department of Defense. Office of the Secretary. *Managing the Reserve Components as an Operational Force*. Series 1200.17. Arlington, VA, 2008.

the, “Homeland Defense and Defense Support to Civil Authorities are total force missions.”⁵² This was one of the first policies that enumerated the RC as an operational organization but even in doing so it focused on its importance in domestic missions. This seems to indicate that present conditions aside, the intention is to maintain the force as a general reserve with the same mission it had historically been assigned.

The Defense Strategic Guidance (DSG) published in 2012 stressed that unconventional military operations will remain prevalent throughout the 21st century. It further stated that the, “expected pace of operations over the next decade will be a significant driver in determining an appropriate A[D]/RC mix and level of RC readiness.”⁵³ Over the next five years, the opportunities for deployment declined substantially as the US would only position approximately 20,000 troops in both Iraq and Afghanistan.⁵⁴ Halfway through the decade that was intended to determine the force’s future, there remains little expectations of spikes in demand. As such, reserve leaders have begun extensive advocacy campaigns as they attempt to prevent a return to the pre-GWOT force.

The changes made throughout the 1970’s and 1980’s elevated the RC to a status that placed it prominently within national security discussions as an organization capable of providing genuine interoperability. With these changes taking hold, the US entered into a conflict where it employed reserve forces in a manner that failed to validate their developing capabilities. Defense planners then reinforced a thirty year old structure while

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Panetta, Leon E., and Barack Obama. *Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense*. Washington, D.C.: Department of Defense, 2012. 7.

⁵⁴ Bialik, Kristen. "U.S. active-duty military presence overseas is at its smallest in decades." Pew Research Center. August 22, 2017. Accessed October 02, 2017. <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/08/22/u-s-active-duty-military-presence-overseas-is-at-its-smallest-in-decades/>.

also immediately altering the core components of the TFP in a manner completely counter to its original intent.⁵⁵ These latter changes were promptly ignored as the Army utilized a significant number of RC troops at the outbreak of OIF. As usage remained high in the early years of GWOT, reserve commanders and defense policymakers built a force truly capable of what had been intended in the late 20th century. Despite these improvements, the DOD has abstained from definitively solidifying the future of the RC by continuing to state that their readiness will be determined by demand.

The policies that developed the present day force were created from a cold war framework and in response to the on-the-ground needs of commanders serving throughout GWOT. Their sustainability without continued deployment requirements seems unlikely. As such, the ARNG continues to prepare primarily for conventional conflict and domestic emergencies while the AR remains focused on “theater level sustainment” responsibilities.⁵⁶ These assignments are relics of an era preparing for state-on-state conflict and a national security strategy where the US military needed to be, “capable of fighting and winning two major theater wars nearly simultaneously.”⁵⁷ Having demonstrated their capacity throughout the GWOT, public perception indicates a desire to retain an OR versus returning to a SR.⁵⁸ Nonetheless, the low demand for reserve personnel, the

⁵⁵ Office of the Assistant Secretary . Department of Defense. "Army Guard and Reserve Restructuring Planned." News release, December 10, 1993. Accessed September 22, 2017. 1. ; U.S Army, Center of Military History, *Department of the Army Historical Summary: Fiscal Years 1990 and 1991* (chapter 8, “Structuring the Force: The Army and Total Force Policy”), 104, <http://www.army.mil/cmh/books/DAH SUM/1990-91/ch08.htm>.

⁵⁶“Home Page, About .” U.S. Army Reserve. Accessed October 1, 2017. <http://www.usar.army.mil/About-Us/>.

⁵⁷Cohen, William S. *The Report of the Quadrennial Defense Review*. Washington, D.C.: Dept. of Defense, 1997.

⁵⁸Stiegel, Brad. "Maintaining the Operational Reserve." January 16, 2016. <http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/maintaining-the-operational-reserve.>;"Preserve an Operational Force. National Guard Association of the United States" 2016. Accessed October 2, 2017.<https://www.ngaus.org/issues-advocacy/priorities-issues/preserve-operational-force>.

lack of definitive guidance from DOD, and the potential for deep budgetary cuts necessitates the need to radically rethink the role of the reserves.

POLICY PROPOSAL

The goal of this proposal is to retain an operational reserve (OR) in a manner that is both conscious of the global security environment and sustainable within domestic fiscal constraints. The objective of this policy is first, to provide the RC a focused mission that justifies a heightened level of readiness, and second, to create a force that is organizationally structured to maintain capacity regardless of overseas troops demands. The first aspect of this proposal is to place operations other than war (peacekeeping, peace-enforcement, disaster response, security sector assistance, humanitarian assistance, stability, and reconstruction operations) under an umbrella formally referred to as unconventional operations (UO); and formally assign the execution of these missions to the RC. The second aspect of this policy calls for the establishment of a targeted training methodology, that builds proficiency in UO while offering soldiers predictability in scheduling.

This new training model, outlined in Figure 6, would utilize a three-phased indefinitely cyclical system that covers a six year planning period. This framework would divide the RC into six separate cohorts each accounting for approximately 16% of the total force. Deliberate care would be taken to ensure that each contingent contained a diverse set of organizational specialties and that no one grouping pulled all of its forces from a single state. Additionally, it is important to acknowledge that it would be units and their associated end strengths that would comprise a cohort, not individuals. It is for this reason, that the cycle only accounts for approximately 96% of the force. The unaccounted

4% represent soldiers who are attending basic training, members of the delayed entry program, pending service termination, or otherwise unavailable. The final caveat worth discussing is that this plan does not affect the ability for individual soldiers to conduct necessary professional development training. These would be independent of the proposed model and would occur regardless of where a unit was located in the cycle.

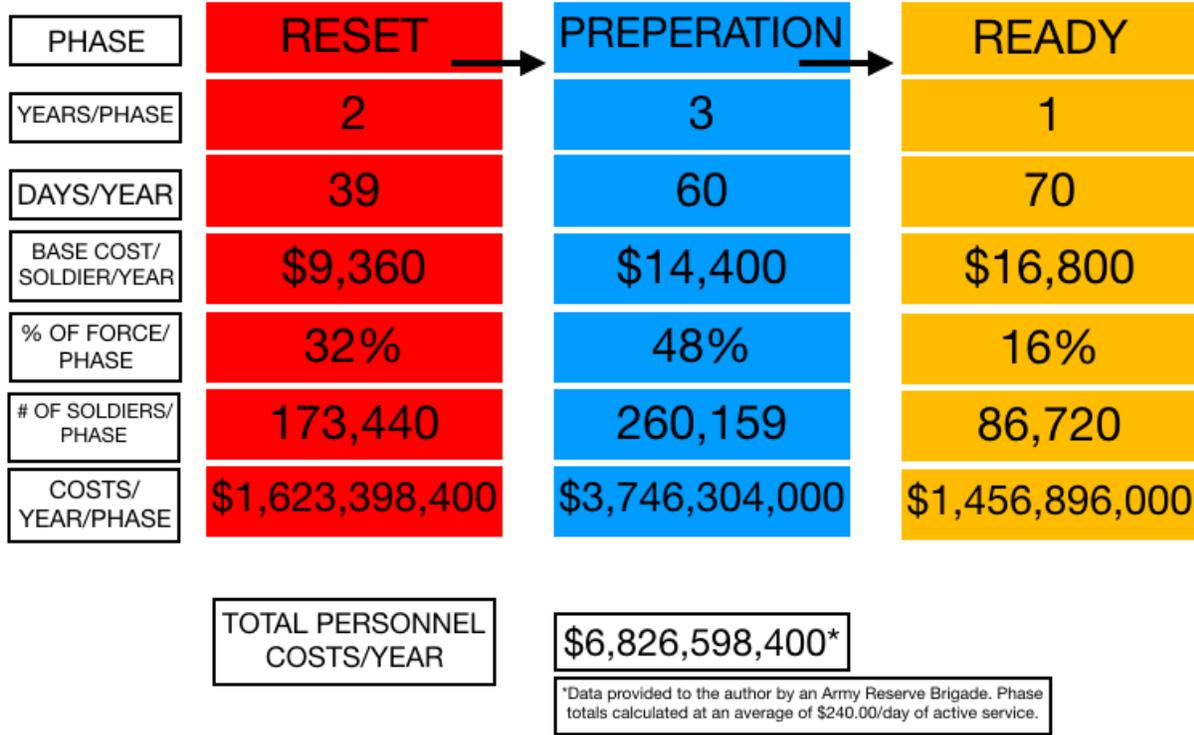
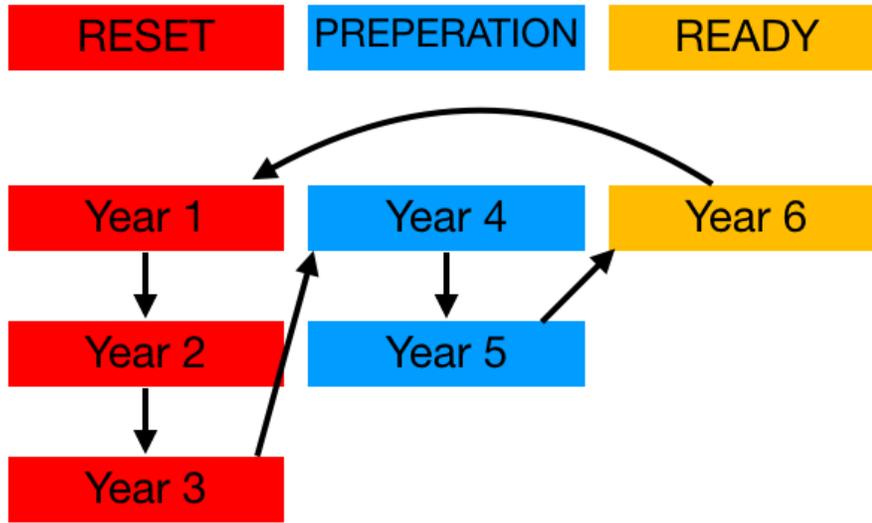


Figure 6: Sustained Readiness Training Model (SRTM)

Figure 7: Yearly Progression through the Sustained Readiness Training Cycle



The Sustained Readiness Training Model, Explained

The Reset Phase

The first phase will last two years requiring units to train only 39 days annually. In this phase, reserve commanders will focus on ensuring that soldiers are medically and physically fit, that equipment is maintained and accounted for, and that basic requirements, like weapons qualifications, are completed satisfactorily. This could also be colloquially referred to as the base phase, due to the fact that the general requirements accomplished in these 39 days would be repeated every year of the training model.

The Preparation Phase

The second phase is three years in duration with a 60 day annual training requirement. In this phase, reserve commanders continue to use 39 of their allotted days to ensure soldier readiness while committing the additional 21 days to prepare their units for UO. Bearing in mind the, “crawl, walk, run” planning methodology, the first, or crawl, year of this phase will be primarily academic giving soldiers a general understanding of

UO. The second, or walk, year would continue to include academic training but would begin to include practical exercises. The third, or run year, would endeavor to build proficiency through the use of extensive exercises capitalizing on the previously gained knowledge.

The Ready Phase

The third phase lasts one year and requires 70 days of annual training. Similarly to the previous two phases, reserve commanders continue to utilize 39 days to verify basic readiness. The remaining 31 days are spent conducting thorough exercises in preparation for immediate deployment. Units within this phase will retain the highest level of readiness and will be prepared to deploy within 30 days of activation. If activated, the “ready” soldiers who are deployed will serve a standard nine month tour. With each cohort comprising over 86 thousand soldiers, it is unlikely that the entirety of a contingent will be used in a single deployment. Those who remain non-deployed will recycle to the “reset” phase as scheduled at the end of the year. The soldiers who did deploy will report back to their originally assigned group at the end of their tour. If forces are still required when this initial deployment ends, soldiers from the new “ready” cohort will deploy as replacements.

Policy Authorization

The changes can be put without the need for new legislation as they are broadly authorized by Title 10 §113 of the US Code (U.S.C.). This subsection grants the SECDEF the, “authority, direction, and control over the Department of Defense.”⁵⁹ Title 10 also requires the SECDEF to enumerate the present national security interests of the

⁵⁹10 U.S.C. § 113 (2016)

US, and to additionally outline the DOD’s plan to effectively assure these interests. This statutory requirement would allow for the inclusion of UO as a national security interest and would provide the legal basis for the RC’s subsequent mission adjustment. The second aspect of this proposal, the updated training cycle, is authorized through Title 10 U.S.C. § 3013. This enables the Secretary of the Army (SECARMY), “to conduct all affairs of the Department of the Army”.⁶⁰ Specifically, this subsection mandates that the SECARMY formulate, “policies and programs...fully consistent with national security objectives”.⁶¹ As the proposed training cycle is in support of the updated mission, it would be legally permissible.

Policy Implementation

The first step in accomplishing these changes is for the SECDEF to utilize the upcoming national defense strategy to frame success in UO as a cornerstone to national security.⁶² Concurrent to this, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff will add and define, “unconventional operations” within the *DOD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms* (proposed language below).

Unconventional Operations- Activities conducted in an attempt to deter war, promote peace, or otherwise advance the national objectives of the United States. These missions include, but are not limited to, general peace operations, security sector assistance, civil military operations, foreign disaster relief, domestic emergencies, stability activities, and reconstruction operations. See also civil affairs activities; peace building; peace enforcement; peacekeeping; and peacemaking. (JP 3-57, JP 3-07.3).⁶³

⁶⁰10 U.S.C. § 3013 (2016)

⁶¹Ibid.

⁶²10 U.S.C. § 113 (2016)

⁶³ United States. Joint Chiefs of Staff. *Joint doctrine for military operations other than war*. Washington, D.C.?: Joint Chiefs of Staff, 1995. Definition inspired by the opening paragraph of vii.

After these two steps have been completed, the previously issued Department of Defense Directive (DODD) titled, “Managing the Reserve Component as an Operational Force” will be updated to include the term UO.⁶⁴ This simple update will read, “c. Homeland Defense, Defense Support to Civil Authorities (DSCA), and Unconventional Operations (UO) are total force missions.”⁶⁵ The addition of UO in the DOD Dictionary, its inclusion in the nation defense strategy, and its mention within a DODD provides the policy framework for the mission adjustment to occur.

Following the previous actions, the implementation of the new training cycle will commence. The first step in this process is to inform Congress of the proposal. To this end, the Chief of the National Guard Bureau and the Chief of the Army Reserves will present the new training plan to the House and Senate Armed Services Committees. Following the initial presentation of the plan, senior Army leaders will be expected to testify on the reasons for the new cycle, the planned roll-out process, and the efforts taken to minimize readiness disruptions. This congressional interaction depends on committee scheduling and should be expected to take a minimum of 6 months to complete.

The second step, after Congressional notification has occurred, is to enact the training cycle through an initial six year pilot program. Unlike the actual cycle which incorporates 16% of the force in each group, the pilot will only comprise a single brigade (approximately 3,000 soldiers) per cohort. The first brigade of the program will begin in the first year of the preparation (or second) phase. As they progress, they will be followed by a second, third, fourth, fifth, and sixth brigade each respectively beginning in the first

⁶⁴ United States. Department of Defense. Office of the Secretary. *Managing the Reserve Components as an Operational Force*. Series 1200.17. Arlington, VA, 2008.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

year of the preparation phase. Although each brigade is initially bypassing the reset phase, this is a one time occurrence in order to immediately test the effectiveness of training units in phase 2 and phase 3.

This pilot program, and the eventual complete conversion to the sustained readiness training cycle, will be overseen by the Commander of U.S. Army Forces Command (FORSCOM). This command has historically conducted similar programs and is the central authority for force changes.⁶⁶ During the final year of the pilot program, the Department of the Army will submit a report to Congress providing first, the lessons learned from the pilot, and second, the plan to transition the entirety of the RC into the cycle.

After administratively dividing the RC into six separate groups, the first contingent would begin at year one, phase one of the cycle. The remaining five groups would continue their training as normal, serving 39 days annually. The six original pilot brigades would continue progressing throughout the cycle, only joining a cohort when the brigade's individual timing aligned with year one phase one. At that point, the seasoned brigade would merge with the infant cohort providing reserve commanders with an experienced organization to fall back on during transitional problems. Gradually, assimilating the pilot brigades in this manner also continues to provide the Army with a deployable force in the third or "ready" phase. The total process from congressional notification to full execution would take approximately 13 years.

POLICY ANALYSIS

The Reserve Component's Mission Adjustment Toward Unconventional Operations

⁶⁶Boyce, Paul. "Total Army Force leaders plan three-year 'Associated Units' Pilot." [www.army.mil](https://www.army.mil/article/168849/Total_Army_Force_leaders_plan_three_year_Associated_Units_Pilot). May 26, 2016. Accessed October 16, 2017. https://www.army.mil/article/168849/Total_Army_Force_leaders_plan_three_year_Associated_Units_Pilot.

This portion of the policy is advantageous for several reasons. An initial benefit is that the updated mission would inevitably transform the reserve's force structure which, at present, is better suited for the cold war than the 21st century.⁶⁷ Additionally, allowing the RC to conduct UO frees the active Army to focus its attention solely on conventional conflict. This would provide the Army genuine strategic depth and a total force, fully trained and capable of executing any number of operations along the spectrum of warfare. This also gives the RC a deliberate purpose and capitalizes on its institutional uniqueness. Reservists, who spend a preponderance of their time in non-military environments, are specially equipped to bring, "maturity, life experience,[and] civilian-acquired skills to their military mission."⁶⁸ This depth of experience means that reservists are not only capable of conducting UO, as was seen in Bosnia and Kosovo, but that they might actually be the better suited component for missions whose success relies heavily upon interactions with civilian populations.⁶⁹

These peacekeeping missions are not the sole indicator of successful reserve usage in UO. In fact, the Texas Army National Guard is presently being lauded as the gold standard for conducting security sector assistance (SSA) in Afghanistan.⁷⁰ In this case, as

⁶⁷Korb, Lawrence J. "Fixing the Mix: How to Update the Army's Reserves." *Foreign Affairs*. January 28, 2009. Accessed October 26, 2017. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2004-03-01/fixing-mix-how-update-armys-reserves>.

⁶⁸"Ambassador: National Guard uniquely suited to peacekeeping operations." *Air National Guard*. October 25, 2011. Accessed October 26, 2017. <http://www.ang.af.mil/Media/Article-Display/Article/435834/ambassador-national-guard-uniquely-suited-to-peacekeeping-operations/>.

⁶⁹Greenhill, Jim. "Multinational Force Observers." *National Guard*. 2011. Accessed September 15, 2017. <http://www.nationalguard.mil/Features/2011/Multinational-Force-Observers/>; Beardsley, Steven. "Active Duty US Troops to do Kosovo Peacekeeping." *Military.com*. Accessed October 02, 2017. <http://www.military.com/daily-news/2013/03/14/active-duty-us-troops-to-do-kosovo-peacekeeping.html>.

⁷⁰United States. Special Inspector General of Afghanistan Reconstruction. *Reconstructing the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces: Lessons from the U.S. Experience in Afghanistan*. 62nd ed. Vol. 17. LL. Alexandria, VA: SIGAR, 2017.

the mobilized unit learned their mission would center around training the Afghan National Police force; they transferred personnel into their unit to ensure that the majority of their soldiers had either teaching, coaching, or previous law enforcement experience.⁷¹ This example is the exception to what had been occurring in Afghanistan, as units tasked with SSA had generally lacked law enforcement background. This seemingly obvious oversight spawned an investigation by the Special Inspector General of Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR). In the report following this study, SIGAR asserted that DOD needs to, “create specialized SSA units that are fully trained and ready to deploy rapidly for immediate SSA missions”.⁷² This undisputed demand-pull for units trained in SSA, the RC’s successful execution of previous peacekeeping operations and the ability to apply a wealth of civilian experience to their military roles all support the proposed mission adjustment.

Alternatively, the mission change can be potentially problematic for the following reasons. The most pressing concern is that focusing 53% of the entire Army on UO risks deteriorating proficiency in conventional conflict which pose a more existential threat to the nation.⁷³ The final issue worth mentioning is that the proposed mission adjustment is not simply an isolated edict. In fact, in order to prepare soldiers appropriately for these contingencies the Army would need to develop an entire education system surrounding

⁷¹Clardy, Christina. "Arrowhead Soldiers deploy to Afghanistan as trainers - Texas Military Department." June 21, 2016. Accessed October 26, 2017. <https://tmd.texas.gov/arrowhead-soldiers-deploy-to-afghanistan-as-trainers>.

⁷²United States. Special Inspector General of Afghanistan Reconstruction. *Reconstructing the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces: Lessons from the U.S. Experience in Afghanistan*. 62nd ed. Vol. 17. LL. Alexandria, VA: SIGAR, 2017.

⁷³FY17 114-328, 114 Cong. (2016) (enacted). ; End strength: total Army is 1,022,000 with 480,000 to be located on Active Duty (AD), 343,000 to be within the Army National Guard (ARNG), and the remaining 199,000 to belong to the United States Army Reserves (AR)

UO. This would be costly and time-consuming. While the initial trainings could be based around present field manuals, in order to build a transferable process for the broader RC a formal education system would need to be established.⁷⁴

The Sustained Readiness Training Model

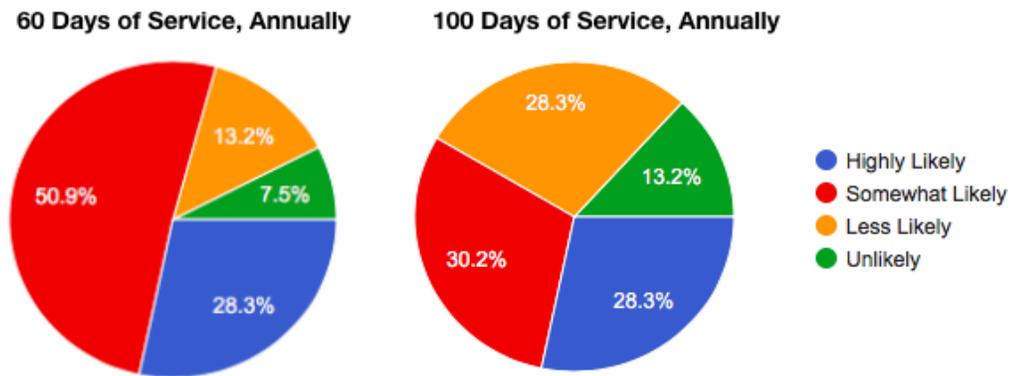
The second portion of the policy, the sustained readiness training model, is advantageous principally because it maintains tiered readiness. This, in and of itself, is a cost saving mechanism when compared to maintaining heightened readiness enterprise wide. It also shows no financial favor to units based on operational skill set, unlike the first to fight resourcing strategy of the 1980's. The training day increases associated with the model (39, 60, and 70 days annually) are also in keeping with the Army's Chief of Staff, General Miley's, desire to increase RC training requirements in an attempt to ease the apparent readiness problems.⁷⁵ The SRTM, unlike General Miley's statement, does not propose reservists serve 100 days per year which would be politically untenable as well as substantially more expensive. Further, any change to the reserve service structure brings with it a possible retention problem. When gauging reservists willingness to remain in service, a survey conducted by the author of this memorandum found that 79% would likely continue serving if there was a 60 day annual training requirement while only 58%

⁷⁴"JP 3-07 Joint Doctrine For Military Operations Other Than War." Accessed October 26, 2017. http://www.bing.com/cr?IG=0443C0C7DF9D49608196055D801F1BD2&CID=05B1071B79356D192D9F0C3C78336C85&rd=1&h=H4JgW-pLpCEEIczNsb9PMbZcJPBGktHuCsMvgIUimNqg&v=1&r=http%3a%2f%2fwww.bits.de%2fNRANEU%2fothers%2fjp-doctrine%2fjp3_07.pdf&p=DevEx,5083.1.

⁷⁵Cox, Matthew. "Army Plans to Double Training Days for Guard Units, Chief Says." Military.com. Accessed October 26, 2017. <http://www.military.com/daily-news/2015/12/14/army-plans-to-double-training-days-for-guard-units-chief-says.html>.

would likely remain if the change was to 100 days.⁷⁶ This data indicates that while retention would certainly need to be addressed as a part of the policy implementation process, the risk for outright rejection of the policy at the individual soldier level is not as significant as was originally believed.

Figure 8: Likelihood of Remaining in Service if Training Requirement Increased



Source: Davidson, Steven B. MS, A Quantitative Analysis of the Army's Reserve Component, Johns Hopkins University.

An additional advantage of the SRTM is that it does not require significant retraining as it incorporates two programs that are already instilled in the RC's mentality. The first of these is the 1:5 service model which was discussed in the history and background section of this memorandum.⁷⁷ Continuing this model grants reservists schedule predictability allowing them to better balance their civilian careers and family lives. Second, the SRTM follows the "crawl, walk, run" training process which is an ingrained

⁷⁶Davidson, Steven B. MS, A Quantitative Analysis of the Army's Reserve Component, Johns Hopkins University.

⁷⁷ United States. Department of Defense. Office of the Secretary. *Utilization of the total force: memorandum for secretaries of the military departments, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Under Secretaries of Defense*. By Robert Michael Gates. Washington, D.C.: Secretary of Defense, 2007.

methodology that the Army almost always employs for such changes.⁷⁸ Lastly, the SRTM is estimated to cost approximately 7 billion dollars which is less than the present 11 billion dollars allocated to the RC for manpower costs.⁷⁹ This costs savings, while important, is the final advantage mentioned principally because it is a very approximate estimate based on average costs per soldier per day of service provided to the author by the operations staff of a current Army Reserve brigade. However, even if the overall figure were to be two billion dollars short of the true costs, the savings afforded to the taxpayer would still be noteworthy.

Conversely, the SRTM is problematic for several reasons. The largest drawback to this plan, is also the easiest to expound upon. Essentially, the Army could implement the SRTM and spend decades and billions of dollars on training soldiers for UO only to never actually utilize them for these operations. This reality aside, the more immediate issue facing the Army would be that expanding the training requirement for reservists is likely to cause the soldier undue hardship as they must adjust their civilian careers and balance their family life accordingly. In fact, the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) states that employers, “are not obligated to re-schedule [service-members] to make up the time lost [by military service]”.⁸⁰ This means that it is possible that soldiers forced to take additional time off might lose financial compensation. Additionally, as many reservists began civilian careers under the traditional 39

⁷⁸Werback, Kathryn. "18th Engineer Brigade Validated for Afghanistan Deployment." *U.S. Army Engineering Magazine*, Fall 2011. <http://www.wood.army.mil/engrmag/PDFs%20for%20Sept-Dec%2011/Werbeck.pdf>.

⁷⁹ United States. 2016. 114th Congress: *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017*. Washington: U.S. G.P.O.

⁸⁰ "Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve." Fact Sheet #4. <https://www.esgr.mil/Service-Members-Family/Additional-Resources>.

days per year of service, the added 29-31 days of military requirement might further strain the employer's ability to make accommodations for these absences. The increased time requirement would also adversely affect reservists educational pursuits.

Figure 9: Army Education Levels by Component, 2014

HIGHEST EDUCATION ATTAINED	ACTIVE ARMY	RESERVE COMPONENT
No High School Diploma or GED	1,411	14,962
High School Diploma/GED or Some College	385,716	386,787
Bachelor's Degree	75,459	87,138
Advanced Degree	39,944	29,602
Unknown	1,800	31,010
Total	504,330	549,510

Data Accessed From: US. Department of Defense. Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Military Community and Family Policy),. *2014 Demographics Profile of the Military Community*.

While the RC possesses 53% of the total bachelor's degrees and 42% of advanced degrees of the total Army, the SRTM becomes problematic when considering the first two rows of Figure 8.⁸¹ Although quantitative data is lacking, qualitative interviews conducted by the author found that a major concern amongst reserve commanders is that annual time increases would adversely affect soldiers who are pursuing, but have not yet been awarded, their GED or bachelor's degrees.⁸² This becomes increasingly relevant when coupled with the knowledge that reservists receive substantially less education ben-

⁸¹US. Department of Defense. Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Military Community and Family Policy),. *2014 Demographics Profile of the Military Community*.

⁸²Vela, Tyler, Palacios, Edward. "Discussions with Current Army Reserve Officers." Telephone interview by author. August 20, 2016.

efits than AD soldiers, forcing the majority of costs to be borne by the individual themselves.⁸³ This means that increased schedule disruptions would precipitate class withdrawal forcing the individual soldier to absorb any sunk costs. Lastly, while the aforementioned polling indicated a favorable reaction to the time increase by soldiers, it is plausible that the respondents failed to truly grasp what that change entailed. Figure 9 depicts a potential SRTM schedule adjusted for minimal impacts on a traditional civilian work week (Monday to Friday). What is seen is that soldiers with full time jobs would work almost everyday of the week with only the occasional weekend off. Regardless of the initial willingness to remain in service, several cycles of the SRTM should be expected to adversely affect retention which will need to be countered with greater benefits.

Figure 10: Sample Calendar of Annual Reserve Training

⁸³"Army Reserve College Education Benefits." Goarmy.com. Accessed October 26, 2017. <https://www.goarmy.com/reserve/benefits/education.html>.

training tools to effectively prepare the force for UO's. Second, would be the need to offset the negative repercussions to soldier morale. This latter issue could likely be assuaged by providing increased civilian education benefits to reservists and through additional cash incentives for enlistment. As current appropriations for RC personnel stands at 11 billion annually; with the SRTM estimated to cost 7 billion dollars annually the Army can not only implement the proposed plan but also provide funding for incentives while still falling under the present costs.⁸⁴

POLITICAL ANALYSIS

Advocacy Organizations

There are two reserve-centric advocacy organizations that would be vocal about the policy proposed in this memorandum. These include the National Guard Association of the United States (NGAUS) and the Reserve Officers Association (ROA).

The NGAUS is an association whose primary focus is lobbying Congress on National Guard issues.⁸⁵ This organization would likely respond favorably to the proposal as it is generally in line with positions the group has previously taken. In fact, in 2015 the NGAUS circulated the results of a survey that was questioning the future of the force.⁸⁶ These findings, seen in Figure 10, asserted that the majority of respondents were supportive of both the RC remaining operational and increasing the amount of days reservists spent training.⁸⁷ Although slightly general, this survey indicates two things. First, that the

⁸⁴ United States. 2016. 114th Congress: *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017*. Washington: U.S. G.P.O.

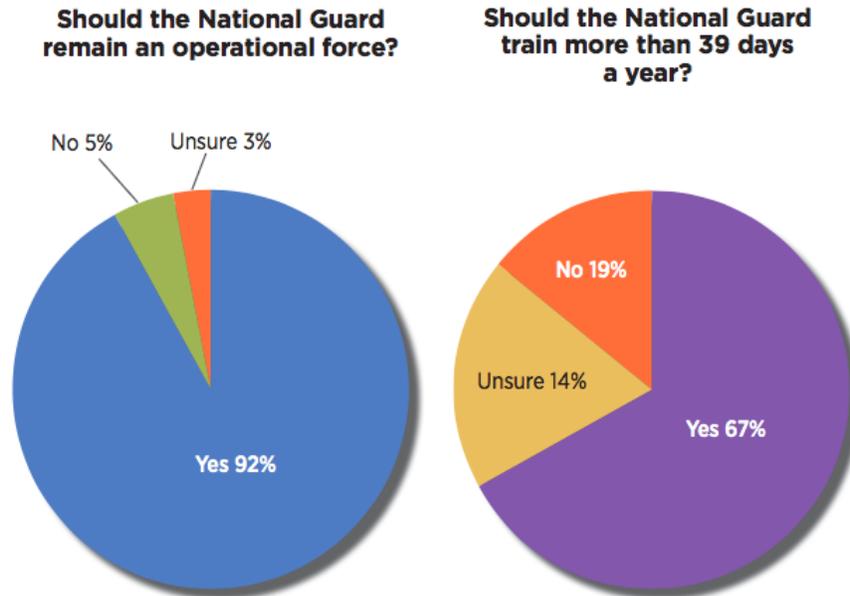
⁸⁵"National Guard Association of the United States." About. Accessed November 12, 2017. <https://www.ngaus.org>.

⁸⁶Timmons, Mark. *Can Do: Army leaders say some Guard units need to train more than 39 days a year. A new survey shows Guardsmen agree*, December 2015, 26-27.

⁸⁷Ibid.

NGAUS' constituents would likely be open to the proposal, and second, that they too would be willing to consider any policy that retained the reserve's heightened readiness.

Figure 11: Survey Conducted by the NGAUS



Source: Timmons, Mark. *Can Do: Army leaders say some Guard units need to train more than 39 days a year. A new survey shows Guardsmen agree*, December 2015, 26-27.

The ROA, is a lobbyist organization that advocates for the RC in totality, not simply the National Guard or the Army Reserves.⁸⁸ Unlike the NGAUS, less assumptions are needed with the ROA as they have formally expounded upon themes similar to the proposed plan.⁸⁹ In 2015, the ROA's president testified in front of the Senate Committee on Armed Services, where he stated that the RC's future should focus on providing the Army surge capabilities instead of, "concentrating on large-maneuverability unit

⁸⁸ "National Guard Association of the United States." About. Accessed November 12, 2017. <https://www.ngaus.org>.3

⁸⁹ *Reserve Officers Association of the United States United States Senate Hearing Senate Committee on Armed Services Revisiting the Roles and Missions of the Armed Forces* (2015) (testimony of Col. James R. Sweeney, USMC (Ret.)).

skills.”⁹⁰ He went on to outline the specific capabilities that he believed the RC was well-equipped to provide which included post-conflict stability operations, homeland security, disaster response, and late stage humanitarian assistance.⁹¹ In fact, within his testimony, the only caveat continually identified was that while the RC possesses a force uniquely capable to conduct UO they, at present, cannot deploy fast enough to be the first on the ground.⁹² With this being the major concern of the ROA, it is easy to see how they would be optimistic about this memorandum's proposal, as this issue would be rectified through the implementation of the SRTM which deliberately increases the readiness and deployability of the reserves.

A non-military advocacy organization that will likely have a mixed opinion of the proposal is the National Governors Association (NGA). The NGA, is a bipartisan association who represents the interests of state governors in Washington D.C.⁹³ This group could be expected to support the RC's mission shift because it would ensure that the reserves abstained from returning to a strategic force; which the NGA has often spoken out against.⁹⁴ While they would be supportive of the first half of this proposal, the NGA would likely be a vocal critic of the SRTM. This is because, as an organization, the NGA has a vested interest in advocating against federal overreach, which the SRTM could be

⁹⁰Ibid.

⁹¹*Reserve Officers Association of the United States United States Senate Hearing Senate Committee on Armed Services Revisiting the Roles and Missions of the Armed Forces* (2015) (testimony of Col. James R. Sweeney, USMC (Ret.)).

⁹²Ibid.

⁹³ "About." National Governors Association. Accessed November 12, 2017. <https://www.nga.org/cms/home>.

⁹⁴ Wong, Kristina. "Governors to Congress: Don't make cuts to National Guard." *The Hill*. February 04, 2016. Accessed November 12, 2017. <http://thehill.com/policy/defense/241731-governors-urge-congress-against-defense-cuts-to-national-guard>.

perceived as. It is possible that the NGA would view the inclusion of disaster response and the lack of specificity between the Army Reserves and the Army National Guard as a further erosion of the Governor's power to command the forces within their borders.⁹⁵ The DOD could counter this perception through an awareness campaign to inform them that first, the separation between the National Guard and the Army Reserves will remain distinct, and second that, Governor's would still maintain command and control of their forces during domestic disasters as long as they remained federally inactive. While the overall intent of the collective proposal is squarely in-line with the desires of the NGA, ROA, and the NGAUS; its implementation will certainly be contested.⁹⁶ The key to political success with these groups, is to communicate with them early in the process and to allow them to propose adjustments throughout the pilot program to mitigate their concerns about the full roll-out.

The United States Congress

In Congress, the major institutions that would be considering this proposal are the House Armed Services Committee (HASC) and the Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC).

Representative Mac Thornberry, the Chairman of HASC, and Senator John McCain, the Chairman of SASC, are two individuals who would need to be consulted, won-over, and leveraged if this proposal is to have success. Fortunately, both members have previously

⁹⁵ "Governors Ask Rumsfeld to Oppose Bush's National Guard Plan." Fox News. August 31, 2006. Accessed November 12, 2017. <http://www.foxnews.com/story/2006/08/31/governors-ask-rumsfeld-to-oppose-bush-national-guard-plan.html>.

⁹⁶ Mark Thompson. "No [Strategic] Reservations." Time. April 19, 2013. Accessed November 12, 2017. <http://nation.time.com/2013/04/19/verbal-attacks-on-strategic-reserve/>.

raised concerns about the military's readiness problems and also spoken in support of retaining an operational reserve.⁹⁷ In fact, Senator McCain recently took to the Senate floor to inform his counterparts that over the past three years, there have been 185 military training deaths and only 44 combat casualties.⁹⁸ This is particularly telling about the problems with the present training paradigm and has been a common statistic highlighted by these two members of Congress who have been leading the charge in reforming the manner in which the military accounts for readiness.⁹⁹ This reality greatly benefits the success of the proposal, as the SRTM's incorporation of the "crawl, walk, run" methodology gradually increases training while providing ample time to safely learn new skills before proceeding to the practical application of knowledge.

Although individual members would be lobbied by advocacy organizations to ensure that their state retained control of their respective National Guard troops, these fears could be assuaged by reassuring congress that the DOD would continue to respect state sovereignty. The overall policy would be favorably viewed by members of Congress because combined, the proposal solidifies the RC as an operational force while concurrently increasing the amount of time available for training.

⁹⁷"McCain: National Guard one reason homeland defense succeeds." Air National Guard. March 21, 2011. Accessed November 12, 2017. <http://www.ang.af.mil/Media/Article-Display/Article/435882/mccain-national-guard-one-reason-homeland-defense-succeeds/>. ; Goheen, John. "A Conversation with Representative Mac Thornberry." National Guard Association of the United States. April 2015. Accessed November 12, 2017. <https://www.ngaus.org/newsroom/news/conversation-rep-mac-thornberry>.

⁹⁸"McCain: National Guard one reason homeland defense succeeds." Air National Guard. March 21, 2011. Accessed November 12, 2017. <http://www.ang.af.mil/Media/Article-Display/Article/435882/mccain-national-guard-one-reason-homeland-defense-succeeds/>.

⁹⁹McCain, John. "Floor Statements - United States Senator John McCain." 2017. Accessed November 12, 2017. <https://www.mccain.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/2017/9/floor-statement-by-sasc-chairman-john-mccain-on-the-national-defense-authorization-act>. ; "Rep. Thornberry Warns Lack of U.S. Military Readiness is Costing Lives." USNI News. October 06, 2017. Accessed November 13, 2017. <https://news.usni.org/2017/10/06/rep-thornberry-warns-lack-u-s-military-readiness-costing-lives>. ; "A discussion with Rep. Mac Thornberry on military readiness, modernization, and innovation." Brookings. May 25, 2017. Accessed November 13, 2017. <https://www.brookings.edu/events/a-discussion-with-rep-mac-thornberry-on-military-readiness-modernization-and-innovation/>.

The Premier Implementer, Secretary of Defense James Mattis

The current SECDEF is the ideal leader to implement this change as he commands a great deal of respect from the military and within Congress. As a former member of the armed forces himself, SECDEF Mattis can present this plan not simply as a necessary policy shift, but as a vital change that would work to create the force of the future. This message would be more willingly received by the public as the SECDEF has a reputation of placing the interests of the military over present political opinions. In fact, in civilian-based polls, SECDEF Mattis' approval rating hovers around 40% placing him well atop his counterparts within the President's Cabinet.¹⁰⁰ In armed forces polling, this approval rating jumps to 89%, the highest in recent memory.¹⁰¹

Collective Political Analysis

The political feasibility of the proposal is high, but the path to success is fraught with potential pitfalls. Despite the fact that the intent of the policy aligns with the desires of major advocacy organizations, there should be an expectation of contention throughout the rollout process. The communication and engagement previously discussed in this section must be true, genuine, early, and often. This proposal must be taken to the ROA, NGAUS, and NGA's leadership and pitched in a series of informational sessions early in the process. The DOD must be willing to genuinely listen to the concerns raised by these groups and must also take steps to rectify prevalent problems. Doing this will help secure their support for the program which is essential for its success. If these groups become

¹⁰⁰ Bowden, John. "Poll: Mattis most popular member of Trump's Cabinet." The Hill. September 27, 2017. Accessed November 12, 2017. <http://thehill.com/homenews/administration/352633-poll-mattis-most-popular-member-of-trumps-cabinet>.

¹⁰¹ Haltiwanger, John. "Most U.S. military officers don't like President Donald Trump, poll says." Newsweek. October 24, 2017. Accessed November 12, 2017. <http://www.newsweek.com/majority-us-military-officers-have-unfavorable-view-trump-new-poll-shows-691807>.

believers in the necessity of the plan, the DOD has then created invaluable ambassadors who will sway opinions in the military community and in Congress.

While the overall proposal fits well within the DOD's legal authorities, if Congress is not consulted and supportive, the HASC and the SASC could indefinitely stall the proposal's roll-out or even reduce personnel appropriations effectively killing the policy. In the politically charged environment that is President Trump's administration, any major government reform should be expected to be challenged. In this regard, this policy has three advantages that make its success highly likely. First, is that the national security reputation of SECDEF Mattis is unparalleled, which will ease doubts cast on the policy's validity. Second, is that the SRTM appears to be a reasonable compromise when compared against the previously suggested 100 day annual requirement of reserve service.¹⁰² Lastly, is that this proposal increases individual soldier proficiency in a safe and incremental manner that is in keeping with the desires of Congress.

RECOMMENDATION

My recommendation is for the SECDEF to implement the full proposal outlined in this memorandum. If enacted, the projected results of this policy would effectively establish a highly-capable force, strategically aligned and tactically prepared to meet the needs of the 21st century. When considering the first aspect of the two-fold proposal, I found that refocusing the RC's mission easily justified the continuation of a heightened level of readiness. This policy also supplements rather than detracts from the Army's

¹⁰²Cox, Matthew. "Army Plans to Double Training Days for Guard Units, Chief Says." Military.com. Accessed October 26, 2017. <http://www.military.com/daily-news/2015/12/14/army-plans-to-double-training-days-for-guard-units-chief-says.html>.

overall capabilities by freeing the active units to focus their attention on direct contact engagements. Additionally, this decision will predicate the transformation of the RC's force structure; taking what has been essentially a general insurance policy and infusing mission specificity that capitalizes on the institutional uniqueness of the organization itself.

When reflecting upon the second aspect of this proposal, I found that the SRTM builds holistic proficiency while concurrently mitigating the readiness problems seen at the onset of the GWOT. The SRTM's targeted training methodology is the greatest asset of this entire proposal. On the whole, this structure safely and deliberately improves the capabilities of the RC while avoiding potential attrition problems by requiring only marginal increases to annual time commitment. Though seeming to be an inconsequential strategy, conducting training in this manner sustainably maintains a numerically significant amount of personnel on immediately-deployable status. This greatly reduces the need to transfer troops between units in order to deploy, directly avoiding problems the Army has previously encountered.

Politically, the biggest issue that this policy will encounter is its lack of distinction between the Army Reserves and the Army National Guard. This potentially grievous impediment can, if managed carefully, be overcome through an awareness campaign that assures these stakeholders that the National Guard will not only retain its state duties, but that it will also maintain its conventional capabilities. With an uncertain global security environment, the need for a well-rounded, proficient, and ready reserve is greater now than ever before. This is a point appreciated by the public and by their representatives in Congress, making this proposal's political feasibility extremely high.

The GWOT proved that the RC is a dedicated and adaptable organization which can overcome tremendous obstacles in order to accomplish their mission. In these tempestuous times, the Army does not simply need a flexible RC, but one that is actively prepared to surmount any number of peripheral military missions. If enacted, this proposal maintains the RC in a heightened state of readiness while concurrently making the Army a multi-dimensional fighting force capable of seamlessly addressing any contingent along the full spectrum of warfare.

Curriculum Vitae

Steven B. Davidson is a native of South Carolina and a member of the Boeing Company. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree in emergency administration and planning from the University of North Texas. Steven is an alumni of the Obama administration having served both at the White House and later at the Department of Energy. He began his career in the United States Army Reserve departing service as a Sergeant and having deployed once to East Africa. While in uniform, he was selected as the Soldier of the Year by *The Army Times* in 2012.