

ASSESSING THE ARMY NATIONAL GUARD'S ENHANCED
BRIGADE CONCEPT: SEARCHING FOR READINESS AND RELEVANCE

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General Studies

by

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The Army's Enhanced Brigades were created in the early 1990s to correct readiness deficiencies discovered in the unsuccessful mobilization of Army National Guard combat units for the Persian Gulf War. According to national leaders, the US military cannot prosecute a major combat operation without them. Critics have consistently questioned current Enhanced Brigade readiness and their relevance to US military strategy. To improve Enhanced Brigade readiness, the Army has instituted a number of integrative programs; these include the Training Support XXII program, the Bosnia Task Force, integrated divisions, and others. Despite the commitment of considerable resources, only very modest improvement in premobilization readiness has been realized and these units are still far less ready than the Army desires. Additionally, Enhanced Brigades are routinely deployed to perform tasks outside of their role in the National Military Strategy. Instead of focusing on readiness for Major Regional Conflicts, Enhanced Brigades are conducting peace operations in Europe and the Middle East, while bearing the burden of ongoing Homeland Security operations. This thesis will provide an investigation into how effective the Army has been in bringing Enhanced Brigades to required readiness levels and keeping these units relevant to the US military's role in accomplishing national strategic objectives.

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The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are those of the student author and do not necessarily represent the views of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College or any other governmental agency. (References to this study should include the foregoing statement.)

ABSTRACT

ASSESSING THE ARMY NATIONAL GUARD'S ENHANCED
BRIGADE CONCEPT: SEARCHING FOR READINESS AND RELEVANCE
by Major Richard G. Greene Jr., 61 pages.

The Army's Enhanced Brigades were created in the early 1990s to correct readiness deficiencies discovered in the unsuccessful mobilization of Army National Guard combat units for the Persian Gulf War. According to national leaders, the US military cannot prosecute a major combat operation without them. Critics have consistently questioned current Enhanced Brigade readiness and their relevance to US military strategy.

To improve Enhanced Brigade readiness, the Army has instituted a number of integrative programs; these include the Training Support XXII program, the Bosnia Task Force, integrated divisions, and others. Despite the commitment of considerable resources, only very modest improvement in premobilization readiness has been realized and these units are still far less ready than the Army desires.

Additionally, Enhanced Brigades are routinely deployed to perform tasks outside of their role in the National Military Strategy. Instead of focusing on readiness for Major Regional Conflicts, Enhanced Brigades are conducting peace operations in Europe and the Middle East, while bearing the burden of ongoing Homeland Security operations.

This thesis will provide an investigation into how effective the Army has been in bringing Enhanced Brigades to required readiness levels and keeping these units relevant to the US military's role in accomplishing national strategic objectives.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The militia is certainly an object of primary importance, whether viewed in reference to the national security, to the satisfaction of the community, or to the preservation of order.

George Washington

Importance and Scope

Throughout its history, the United States Army has assigned significant warfighting functions to the Army National Guard (ARNG). ARNG units have been mobilized and deployed for every major operation undertaken by the United States military since 1941. American citizen-soldiers have performed their wartime duties in a consistently exemplary manner. Today, ARNG units are at their historical best, and are comparable or superior to the active duty forces of most other nations (Gross 1997, 2). Essentially all of the ARNG's warfighting capability is resident in combat arms units referred to as enhanced separate brigades. By many accounts, the Army has struggled to maintain the training readiness of enhanced separate brigades during peacetime. The purpose of this thesis is to investigate the following question: *have Department of the Army programs, policies, and initiatives implemented to maintain the readiness and relevance of the ARNG's enhanced separate brigades been successful?*

The scope of this research project will encompass facts, opinions, and analysis concerning the ARNG's enhanced separate brigades. While the ARNG and United States Army Reserve (USAR) contain a wide array of other units and headquarters, this thesis will focus exclusively on enhanced separate brigades. The conclusions and

recommendations concerning enhanced separate brigades will be drawn from premobilization training and post mobilization training assessments, reports of enhanced separate brigade performance while deployed, and observations made by individuals and agencies involved in leading, training, administrating, and overseeing the ARNG.

Key Terms

Any investigation of eSBs requires an understanding of a number of specific key terms:

Enhanced Separate Brigade (eSB): a brigade-sized combat arms organization assigned to the ARNG which is manned, trained, and equipped to deploy overseas ninety days after mobilization, to participate in mid or high-intensity warfare, under the command of a Unified Combatant Commander. Currently, the ARNG maintains mechanized infantry, light infantry, and armored eSBs.

Premobilization Training: Training conducted before an ARNG unit is alerted and mobilized for deployment. Normally, ARNG are required to demonstrate proficiency in crew and platoon-level tasks while in a premobilization status.

Postmobilization Training: Training conducted after an ARNG unit is alerted and mobilized for a combat deployment. ARNG units are required to demonstrate proficiency in company, battalion, and brigade level tasks before being certified for deployment.

Inactive Duty Training (IDT): Premobilization training periods conducted monthly by ARNG units.

Annual Training (AT): An annual premobilization training period, during which ARNG units are evaluated on crew and platoon level task proficiency.

Training Support Brigades (TSB): Multi-component Army units whose officers and non-commissioned officers develop IDT and AT training programs for battalions assigned to ARNG eSBs. Members of TSBs are tasked to teach, coach, and mentor ARNG leaders, and evaluate the performance of ARNG units.

Major Regional Conflict (MRC): As described in the 1997 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), one of two potential regional dangers DOD believes will confront the US between now and 2015. First among these is the threat Iran and Iraq pose to the free flow of Middle Eastern oil. Next is the threat North Korea presents to South Korea because of its increasingly dire economic condition and its large military presence close to the South Korean border (CBO 1997). The most recent DOD strategy documents also refer to MRCs as Major Combat Operations (MCOs).

Total Force Concept: An enduring policy, adopted by the DOD in the early 1970's, that restructured the military into a homogenous whole comprised of active duty, ARNG, and USAR forces (Behan 2002, 3). The policy sought to field a credible deterrent and reaction force on active duty, while reaping the fiscal benefits of maintaining 50 percent or more warfighting capability in a less-expensive reserve status. The Department of the Army has supported the Total Force policy with its Total Army concept.

Lane Training: A process for training company-size and smaller units on collective tasks (and prerequisite soldier and leader individual tasks and battle drills) supporting a unit's Mission Essential Task List (METL) (Army 1996). The process consists of planning, execution, and assessment phases. US Army units use lanes training to increase and evaluate proficiency.

Background

The ARNG, eSBs, and National Military Strategy

In 1997, the Clinton Administration described the ARNG's current role within the American National Military Strategy (NMS). The NMS stated:

The Reserve Components, in addition to being essential participants in the full range of military operations, are an important link between the Armed Forces and the public. Mobilization of the Reserve Components has always been an important indicator of the commitment of national will. Guardsmen and reservists are not only integrated into war plans, but also provide critical skills in carrying out contingency operations, as well as augmenting and supporting active units during peacetime. National Guard and other Reserve Component elements also provide the NCA with a strategic hedge against uncertainty and with an organized basis to expand our Armed Forces if necessary. Additionally, they also provide a rotational base to ease the tempo of unit and individual deployments for the Active Component. (Shalikashvili 1997)

In September of 2001, the Bush Administration used the 2001 QDR to introduce the tenets of a new National Security Strategy. Shifting the focus of military planning away from preparing for two MRCs in Northeast and Southwest Asia, to building a portfolio of capabilities that is robust across the possible continuum of possible military operations. Of the role of Reserve component forces, the QDR stated, DOD will continue to rely on reserve Component forces to support this strategy. The QDR specifies eight of the Army's eighteen combat divisions will be provided by the ARNG; with fifteen ARNG brigades identified as enhanced brigades (Rumsfeld 2001, 17, 21, 23).

The Total Force Policy

Despite such clear definition, the Department of the Army has struggled in its attempts to train and maintain an ARNG that fulfills these strategic requirements. Conceptually, today's ARNG of today grew from the end of Selective Service conscription enacted to provide troops to fight in Vietnam during the 1960s and early

1970s (Gross 1997, 3). When the draft ended, the now smaller, all-volunteer Army was unable to meet its manpower requirements in the anti-military, post-war social climate. A policy was needed to correct the hollow army the United States pitted against the Soviet Union in the ongoing Cold War (Heller 1991, 12). In 1973, Defense Secretary Arthur Schlesinger and Army Chief of Staff General Creighton Abrams propagated a Total Force policy. Originally envisioned by the previous Defense Secretary Melvin Laird, America's Total Force military would employ a mix of active and reserve forces to meet the initial demands of a major war (Reserve Force Policy Board 2000, 2). In describing the Total Force policy, Schlesinger stated, "a RC Brigade can be made ready for deployment sooner than a RC division" (DOD 1975, 193). To this end, Army instituted the CAPSTONE program, which aligned Army Reserve or National Guard units with the active force, based on wartime requirements. Additionally, the Army assigned seven of its active divisions, two active brigades and one ARNG roundout brigade. These roundout brigades would mobilize and deploy with their Active Component (AC) divisions in the event of a major war overseas (Gross 1997, 3).

During the 1980s, the Reagan Administration sought to improve the capability of the American military through massive increases in defense spending and rapid force modernization. By 1989, the Army had increased from thirteen to eighteen divisions and maintained personnel strength of 785,000, including soldiers assigned to roundout brigades (Schubert and Kruse 2001, 70). Successful military operations in Grenada and Panama, along with the dissolution of the Soviet Union and Warsaw Pact at the close of the decade, demonstrated America's military revitalization to the rest of the world. As the power and prestige of the US military increased, public discussion of peace dividends and

military downsizing began. As the American Congress tightened defense spending, the historical contention between active and reserve forces re-emerged; proponents for both advocated for a greater share of the defense budget (Duncan 1997, 9). This growing tension between active and reserve forces would coincide with a crisis in the Middle East that would propel the debate over the readiness and relevance of ARNG roundout brigades into the public eye.

Desert Storm and the Total Army

In August 1990, Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein ordered his armed forces to invade and annex Kuwait. In a matter of days, Iraq had occupied its tiny neighbor, and reaffirmed its longstanding claim to Kuwaiti territory. American president George Bush believed the Iraqi invasion imperiled vital American geopolitical and economic interests. Over two-thirds of the world's oil flowed from that region, and Bush contented that a regional aggressor like Hussein could exert unprecedented influence against oil-importing nations if left unchecked (Clayburn 1996, 17). In response, Bush initiated preparations for military action against Iraq. On 22 August, 1990, Bush authorized a partial call-up of reserve forces from all the Services, to include 25,000 combat support and combat service support troops. In a speech that same day, Bush expressed his confidence in the reserves, stating, "The US considers its reserve forces to be an integral part of the to total military command. I have the highest confidence in their ability to augment the active forces in this operation" (Duncan 1997, 26). While a seemingly ringing endorsement, Bush's remarks did nothing to prevent the storm of controversy that would envelop the American government over this issue.

In an effort to demonstrate the viability of the Army's Total Army concept, Chief of Staff, General Carl E. Vuono had personally requested the mobilization of these initial reserve units, based on the calculations of Army war planners. Conversely, the Army Staff determined that it would be inefficient to mobilize roundout brigades when there were sufficient combat arms units in the active force. Additionally, critics of this decision suggested that the Army leadership simply had little confidence in the readiness of reserve combat arms units and were not comfortable deploying them to a "shooting" war in the Persian Gulf. General Norman Schwarzkopf, the commander of US Central Command and coalition forces, was reported to be at best, ambivalent, or at worse, unenthusiastic about the Army sending roundout brigades to his theater of war (Duncan 1997, 64). The Army's V Corps commander, Lieutenant General John W. Woodmansee, actually remarked, "it's patently absurd to take relatively untrained troops when you have trained troops available" (Schubert and Kruse 2001, 71-72).

This reluctance to mobilize roundout brigades spurred an intense backlash from congressional members with these reserve units stationed in their respective electoral districts. On 16 October, Representative Les Aspin, chairman of the House Armed Services committee announced, "a national debate is beginning over the role of the reserves in our forces of the future." Aspin went on to characterize the Army's arguments against mobilizing the roundout brigades as, "about as solid as sand" (Duncan 1997, 65). Other politicians in Congress joined the debate. At the end of October, the Congress past a defense appropriations bill that contained an amendment increasing the amount of time the President could activate, selected Reserve combat units from 90 days to 180 days.

This legislation removed any administrative obstacles to deploying roundout brigades and served to express Congress's desire to see these units utilized.

Sensing the political pressure, the Bush Administration decided that political realities trumped any concern for the actual readiness of the roundout brigades. On November 7, Secretary of Defense Cheney and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Colin Powell announced a Presidential Partial Reserve Call Up of Army Reserve and ARNG units from all fifty states. Three roundout brigades from Georgia's 48th Infantry Division, Mississippi's 155th Armored Division, and Louisiana's 256th Infantry Division would be mobilized to augment the active component's 24th Infantry Division, 1st Cavalry Division, and 5th Infantry Division, respectively. When reporters questioned Cheney about the readiness of the units, he stated that DOD, "wanted to be absolutely certain Guard and reserve combat units have the opportunity for additional training and if they meet the necessary standards, they will be available for deployment" (Duncan 1997, 72).

The 48th Brigade reported to Fort Stewart, Georgia for its postmobilization training. According to former Assistant Secretary of Defense Stephen M. Duncan, the units of the 48th Brigade were trained and evaluated to the same standards applied to active duty units. In fact, according to Mr. Duncan, the innate personnel stability in ARNG units and the, cumulative effect of the same people training together for several years made the 48th more effective than what was expected (Duncan 1997, 82). There were however, significant deficiencies revealed during the Brigade's validation exercise at the National Training Center. Mr. Duncan would testify to Congress all three of the roundout brigades experienced difficulty in synchronizing and integrating the battlefield

operating systems. Additionally, the Brigade's soldiers lacked proficiency in battlefield survival skills, were deficient in MOS-specific training, and struggled to maintain the readiness of their tracked vehicles (Duncan 1997, 84). Eventually, all three of the roundout brigades: the 48th Infantry Brigade, the 155th Armored Brigade, and the 256th Infantry Brigade, were assembled at their respective mobilization stations for training certification and possible deployment.

Ultimately, none of the three roundout brigades mobilized for OPERATION DESERT STORM/DESERT SHEILD were deployed to the Persian Gulf. The Department of the Army refused to certify the 48th Brigade after it completed ninety-one days of postmobilization training. The 155th completed training in 106 days and was also not certified. The 256th was demobilized before completing its postmobilization requirements, with Army officials projecting completion in no less than 135 days. In addition, Army evaluators estimated each brigade would require an additional twenty-four days to ensure personnel and equipment readiness (Gross 1997, 6). In lieu of the 48th Brigade, an active duty separate mechanized brigade, Fort Knox's 197th, was deployed to augment the 24th Division. Critics inside the military and Congress pummeled the Department of the Army with allegations of bias against reserve units. In 1996, *National Guard* magazine published an article by retired Major General James Delk, the deputy chief of an Army Inspector General team which had participated in the assessment of the mobilized roundout units. Among a list of allegations in the article, Delk claimed active duty evaluators retroactively downgraded the 48th Brigade's assessments in an attempt to prove the roundout concept was unfeasible (Delk 1996).

In the early months of 1991, US and coalition forces arrayed against the Iraqi army attacked from the air and ground. Saddam Hussien's forces were defeated in one of the most decisive campaigns in military history. While thousands of USAR and ARNG personnel participated by providing combat support and combat service support in OPERATION DESERT SHIELD/DESERT STORM, reserve component combat arms unit provided no significant contribution to the coalition's dramatic victory.

Creation of the eSB Concept

A little more than a year after the Gulf War, the American Congress began to address the reserve component's problems. In an attempt compel the Army to address the roundout brigade's perceived shortcomings, Congress passed the Army National Guard Combat Readiness Act (ANGCRA) in 1992. The nineteen provisions in Title XI of this legislation served as the catalyst for sweeping changes and major policy initiatives for the Total Force. In response to ANGCRA, the Army developed the eSB concept, and began a series of enhancements that were designed to prepare the ARNG for its role in warfighting beyond the turn of the century.

The eSB Concept Today

Currently, the ARNG maintains fifteen eSBs (see figure 1). These units are considered the highest priority units in the Army's reserve component and receive significant attention in the Army's effort to integrate its three major components: active duty forces, USAR forces, and the ARNG. As with all ARNG forces, eSBs possess a constitutionally mandated status as members of their individual state militias and as reserve members of the US Armed Forces. Title 32 of the United States Code (USC) governs the conduct, training, and command relationships of ARNG members

when not mobilized but are engaged in military training. As state militia, eSBs fall under the authority of their state adjutant general and state governors. After a mobilization,

27th Infantry Brigade, Syracuse, New York
29th Infantry Brigade, Honolulu, Hawaii
30th Infantry Brigade (Mechanized), Clinton, North Carolina
39th Infantry Brigade, Little Rock, Arkansas
41st Infantry Brigade, Portland, Oregon
45 Infantry Brigade, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
48th Infantry Brigade (Mechanized), Macon, Georgia
53rd Infantry Brigade, Tampa, Florida
76th Infantry Brigade, Indianapolis, Indiana
81st Infantry Brigade (Mechanized), Seattle, Washington
116th Cavalry Brigade, Boise, Idaho
155th Armored Brigade, Tupelo, Mississippi
218th Infantry Brigade (Mechanized), Newberry, South Carolina
256 Infantry Brigade (Mechanized), Lafayette, Louisiana
278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, Knoxville, Tennessee

Figure 1, Army eSBs. *Source:* GAO, US Govt. Printing Office, 2000, 22.

eSBs are assigned to an active component commander in accordance with Title 10, USC (Behan 2002, 5). In 2000, two active duty division headquarters were established to provide training and readiness oversight of eSB when in a premobilization status. Other Army units provide training support to eSBs during IDTs and ATs. Units from eSBs routinely conduct missions ranging from disaster relief to law enforcement in support of their respective governors. Since the terrorist attacks on 11 September 2001, units and personnel from eSBs have participated in a variety of homeland security operations under both Title 32 and Title 10 authorities. To date, none of the eSBs has been mobilized for participation in a MCO, however, a number of eSBs have provided forces to US

European and Central Commands for peacekeeping operations in the Balkans and the Sinai Peninsula; eSBs are programmed for future use in these missions.

Summary

eSBs were created in an attempt to correct readiness deficiencies in ARNG combat arms units discovered after the ineffectual mobilization of roundout brigades for duty in the Persian Gulf War. eSBs are arguably the most significant organizations in the US military's reserve component and are considered a major aspect of DOD's Total Force policy. According to American national leaders, the US military cannot prosecute its current NMS without them. Critics and advocates alike have questioned eSB readiness and the relevance of their assigned roles. The succeeding chapters will investigate and assess the Army's effort to keep eSBs concept viable.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

There is a considerable amount of literature concerning the development, functioning, and assessment of ARNG eSBs. These sources can be divided in four distinct categories: doctrinal publications and regulatory documents, assessments and reports, Army institutional research, and commentary and opinion.

Regulatory Documents and Doctrinal Publications

The US government, and specifically DOD, describes the roles, functions, and assessments of its reserve forces in many different documents. When taken together, these documents describe a critical role for eSBs in meeting strategic defense requirements in accordance with DOD's Total Force policy.

The current NMS, subtitled: *Shape, Response, Prepare Now-A Military Strategy for a New Era* was published in 1997 by Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, John M. Shalikashvili, on behalf of the Clinton Administration. Designed to support the National Security Strategy, this document describes how the military will fulfil its role in global engagement, deter threats of organized violence against America, and defeat adversaries in as many as two simultaneous MRCs. The NMS describes the role of the ARNG in prosecuting war and conducting military operations other than war.

Current Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld published *The Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), 2001* on 30 September 2001. Significantly influenced by the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, this document describes a dramatic shift in US military strategy. In the QDR, the threat-based two simultaneous

MRC construct that had guided civilian and military leaders for decades, is replaced with an imperative to develop a “portfolio of capabilities” which spans the spectrum of possible military requirements; from counter terrorism to major theater war. The QDR describes a US Army consisting of ten active and eight reserve maneuver divisions, including fifteen eSBs.

Army Regulation 350-4, Training In Units, prescribes the Department of the Army policy for the conduct of training in units. Last updated in March of 1993, the final chapter of this regulation describes premobilization and postmobilization training requirements for the ARNG. These requirements apply directly to eSBs.

Assessments and Reports

Many public and private institutions and organizations have examined eSBs. These bodies have issued a large number of assessments and reports describing various aspects of the Department of the Army's endeavor to increase USAR and ARNG readiness and improve how active and reserve component forces perform together. The Army refers to programs, policies, and initiatives designed to accomplish this as AC/RC integration. eSB effectiveness and readiness are a major concern in the Army integrative effort. A majority of these reports describe eSBs that have struggled to meet premobilization training, personnel, and materiel readiness goals. It is important to note, however, some measurable improvements have been described in more recent reports.

The Rand Corporation describes itself as a private institution focused on improving military, governmental, and social policy and decision-making through research and analysis. In *Breaking the Mold: a New Paradigm for the Reserve*

Components, several Rand authors describe reserve component units as ill-prepared for deployment and recommend strategies for increasing the readiness of these forces.

Rand's Arroyo Center claims the title of the United States Army's only federally funded research and development center for studies and analysis. The Arroyo Center has provided a number of publications on the USAR and ARNG. *Assessing the Performance of the Army Reserve Components School System* was the result of a US Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) and Rand Corporation collaboration to review of the Army's reserve component training system and evaluate a new TRADOC prototype training system fielded in 1996. The Arroyo Center published *Postmobilization Training Resource Requirements* to examine the adequacy of resources for the postmobilization training of ARNG heavy eSBs. In *Ensuring Personnel Readiness in the Army Reserve Components*, the Rand Corporation investigated personnel shortfalls experienced by units activated for OPERATIONS DESERT SHIELD and DESERT STORM. The authors also recommend policies to enhance personnel readiness in the Army's reserve component.

In performing its constitutionally mandated oversight over military policy and budget, the United States Congress frequently examines the roles and readiness of reserve forces. Due to the unique and close relationship shared between the ARNG and congressional representatives, defense committee members have focused attention on development of eSBs. Before the Senate Armed Services committee in 1996, the US General Accounting Office (GAO) reported none of the eSBs had achieved the training proficiency the Army required for deployment within 90 days of mobilization. Additionally, the GAO reported active duty advisors assigned to assist the eSBs were beset with ambiguous roles, poor management communication, and difficult working

conditions. In a June 2000 report entitled *Army National Guard: Enhanced Brigade Readiness Improved but Personnel and Workload Are Problems*, the GAO described the training readiness problems currently experienced by eSBs, but indicated modest improvements in some areas. Also in 2000, a GAO report entitled described the status of the Army's overall integration as progressing but still beset with challenges.

Finally, the Congressional Budget Office recently released a report entitled *The Active and Reserve Army for the 21st Century*. This study examined several alternative approaches for meeting the Army's force requirements. It compared the advantages and disadvantages of each alternative to current Army programs, and the Army's future plan to reorganize the ARNG.

Due to the considerable warfighting capability resident in the reserves of all the military's services, the Office of the Secretary of Defense has focused considerable effort in conducting internal monitoring of reserve readiness. In the *Fiscal Year 2000 Report of the Reserve Forces Policy Board* issued in May of 2001, current reserve component roles, missions, and operations were examined. Review of policies for funding, manpower, readiness, training, equipment, and facilities comprise the bulk of this annual review.

Army Institutional Research

In the 1990s and into this decade, students at the Army War College and other military academic institutions have conducted numerous examinations of the ARNG its shortfalls, strengths, and means to insure its readiness and relevance. Generally, these works describe the Army's integrative programs as suffering from unity of effort and piecemeal implementation.

In a monograph from 1991 entitled *The New Military Strategy and its Impact on the Reserve Components*, Charles Heller examined post-cold war US military strategy and proposes changes in the integration of the Army's components. In this work, the author reviews the Total Army's experience in preparing for and conducting OPERATIONS DESERT SHIELD and DESERT STORM as a case study.

In a short 1992 work titled *Restructuring the Army: The Road to the Total Force*, Phillip Brehm provides a list of innovative roles and functions for reserve forces. Mr. Brehm's argues the ARNG should forgo its attachment to combat units (like eSBs) in favor of combat support and combat service support units.

While attending the Army War College in 1996, Lieutenant Colonel Warren Cate released *Enhanced Brigade Combat Leadership Dilemma*. This study identified a key problem in ARNG eSB readiness: inadequate leader experience in battlefield synchronization and command and control of large maneuver units. Several means to mitigate this problem were offered.

Also in 1996, Lieutenant Colonel Terry Robinson described the concept, structure, and mission of eSBs in *National Guard Enhanced Brigades: the Past, the Present, and the Future*. This work also provided insight on issues and concerns that must addressed to ensure the future success of these units.

Army War College alumnus, Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Gross, completed a research project in 1997, entitled *National Guard Enhanced Readiness Brigades: the Achilles Heel of Our National Military Strategy and What to Do About It*. This study described the role and functions of the ARNG and the readiness challenges that limit the

ARNG's performance and recommended several systemic changes to correct these shortfalls.

In a recent work entitled, *AC/RC Integration: Today's Success and Transformation's Challenge*, the US Army War College's, Lieutenant Colonel Dallas Owens, investigated current Total Army integration programs and initiatives and examines possible how Total Army integration efforts will affect Army Transformation. His monograph included recommendations about the future of eSBs.

While a student at the Army Command and General Staff College in 1996, Major Eric Clayburn prepared a thesis entitled *Relooking Sacred Cows: The Eight National Guard Combat Divisions*. Clayburn described the current force structure of the ARNG Divisions as excessive and without a relevant mission. He provides recommendations concerning the revision of ARNG roles and structures.

Lastly, in a 2002 thesis, Major Christopher Behan, an active duty Army Judge Advocate, published a thesis entitled *Background, Legal Foundation, and Judge Advocate Operations in the Integrated AC/RC Divisions*. This work provided a detailed history of the Army's Total Army integration effort and the latest programs for enhancement of eSB readiness.

Other Commentary and Opinion

The government's longstanding endeavor to maintain the viability and relevance of the military's reserve component has spurred a considerable amount of interest among defense policy experts, members of the media, and military professionals. Among the Services, Army maintains the largest amount of manpower and equipment in its reserves. The ARNG's eSBs comprise some of the most visible and controversial aspects of DOD

reserve policy and these units receive a large amount of media attention. Even literature intended as historical accounts contain some judgements on reserve employment. The content and tone of these works vary, but a review of any sample will reveal the broad scope of opinion and philosophy which fuels the debate over how reserve forces should be organized, prioritized and utilized.

Former Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs, Steven Duncan published a book entitled *Citizen Warriors* in 1997. In this book, Mr. Duncan provided a modern history of the reserve component and expressed criticism of the current role of ARNG and reserve forces in national defense. Central to the book's topic is a detailed recounting of DOD's mobilization of three ARNG roundout brigades for possible deployment to the Persian Gulf to participate in OPERATION DESERT STORM/DESERT SHIELD.

The US Army's Center for Military History, presented *The Whirlwind War* in 1997. This book's editors, Frank Schubert and Theresa Kraus, compiled historical information about the US Army's operations during OPERATIONS DESERT SHIELD and DESERT STORM. The editors provided detailed information about the mobilization of USAR and ARNG units for service in the Persian Gulf War.

Editors of popular media and many professional periodicals have included numerous articles concerning the current state and future of the ARNG and its eSBs. In a significant number of these articles, authors have reported on the mobilization and deployment of ARNG combat units for peace operations in the European and Central Command Areas of Responsibility. In *A Bigger Piece of Peace Keeping*, published in *National Guard* in January of 2000, Chris Maddaloni provides an overview of the

ARNG's 49th Armored Division's recent deployment to Bosnia. The future deployment of other ARNG units is also detailed. In 1999, *National Guard* included an article entitled *Enhanced Brigades*, by Kevin McAndrews. Mr. McAndrews provided a review of eSB readiness according to the ARNG Fiscal Year 2000 Posture Statement and other evaluative sources. In a 1996 issue of *National Guard*, retired Army Major General Jim Delk published an article asserting the Army deliberately sabotaged the mobilization and certification of roundout brigades alerted for possible deployment to the Persian Gulf War. Delk identified the prejudices of senior active Army leaders as the main reason for the ARNG's failure to deploy these units. Writing in *the Christian Science Monitor* in January of 2002, Abraham McLaughlin, described the negative impact of ARNG unit deployments on local communities in an article entitled "*US Guard Call-up Hits Cities Hard.*" Lastly, in a 2001 USA Today article by Dave Moniz, decried that "*Ghost Soldiers Inflate Guard Numbers*" and detailed a number of instances of ARNG personnel accounting irregularities, which indicate troubling manpower deficiencies.

Summary

Most serious reviews of past and present American military affairs describe the vital role US reserve forces have served in the past, and will continue to serve in the future. The conclusions drawn in these works are remarkably varied and appear to depend on the author's perception of how the Army's reserves should be included in the NMS. Many reports of eSB readiness are not entirely positive, and many writers proffer conflicting views on the most effective means of ensuring the Army's three components are effectively integrated. In the following two chapters, a method of examining the current readiness and relevance of eSBs will be presented and then performed.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Primary Research Question

As described at the beginning of chapter 1, this research project is focused on answering this primary research question: *have Department of the Army programs, policies, and initiatives implemented to maintain the readiness and relevance of the ARNG's eSBs been successful?* By most accounts, reports, and assessments, the Army's eSBs currently maintain an unacceptably low level of readiness and serious questions regarding the planned and current use of eSBs exist. Despite a number of policies, initiatives, and program enhancements, critics claim that success remains elusive.

The Significance of eSBs

Because the Department of the Army and DOD are deeply invested the concept of a multicomponent total force, lack of readiness among eSBs cannot be acceptable status quo. The ARNG maintains a total of fifteen eSBs: including armored, mechanized, and light infantry brigades, and one armored cavalry regiment. This is a force larger than the entire Australian Army. eSBs remain the primary tactical combat arms organizations in the Army's reserves, possessing some of the most advanced combat systems and equipment on the planet. DOD and the Army have promised Unified Combatant Commanders trained and ready eSBs for use in standing war plans. Millions of dollars from state and federal budgets have been invested in maintaining eSBs, and congressional leaders have associated the welfare of their many of their constituents, both in and out of Guard uniforms, with the success of these units. Compelled by these

realities, Army leaders have committed themselves to sustaining the readiness of its eSBs.

The Case Against the eSB Concept

Criticism of the eSB concept originates from within the civilian government, DOD, the active Army, the reserves, and the defense policy establishment. Opponents of the eSB concept cite substandard readiness levels and have advocated for the development of alternate concepts for sustaining reserve warfighting capability. Some encourage DOD to eliminate reserve combat arms units in favor of an RC consisting of exclusively combat support and combat service support units; claiming the ARNG could follow the USAR's concentration on service support functions such as logistics and training support. Other commentators have recommended reorganizing the ARNG to assume more of the expeditionary, small-scale contingency role. They offer evidence that reservists are better suited than active forces for constabulary, peace operations (Robinson 2002).

Secondary Research Questions

The first step in divining the future of the eSB concept is to examine and assess the effectiveness of the Army's efforts to keep eSBs ready. If eSBs are not prepared to fulfill their designed role, then their relevance to the NMS is in question. Once this question is answered, the Army can do what needs to be done to the eSB concept. Finding the answer to this project's primary research question requires addressing a number of secondary questions. These secondary questions are components of the primary question; to leave one of these unattended would result in faulty conclusions.

The first secondary research question is *what factors led to the development of the eSB concept?* The eSB concept was developed to assist the ARNG in maintaining a level of premobilization readiness. The eSB concept must be examined in the context in which it was developed. If the realities that led the Army to develop eSBs still exist, then the concept still remains viable. If these factors no longer exist, or exist in modified forms, the eSB concept can be replaced with something better or changed to ensure relevance to military requirements that exist today and in the future. This question is the start point for this thesis and has been addressed in Chapter 1.

The next secondary questions is: *how did mobilizations for OPERATIONS DESERT SHIELD and DESERT STORM impact did has upon the development of eSBs?* The question is derived from the first secondary question but deserves a significant degree of focus. By some accounts, the ARNG failed in its responsibility to provide brigades to roundout three active component combat divisions when these divisions were to be deployed for combat in the Persian Gulf. When two of these brigades were evaluated at the end of their postmobilization training periods, active duty officers refused to certify them as ready for deployment. Other accounts argue that this assessment was not based on an accurate evaluation of these units' readiness and moreover, were motivated by a desire to discredit the ARNG and keep reserve component combat arms units out of the war. This situation, and the controversy which surrounded it, were the catalyst for the programs, policies, and initiatives that molded the eSB concept into what it is today. Chapter One's background discussion focuses on the Army's experience in attempting to deploy its ARNG roundout brigades in the months prior to the Persian Gulf War.

The third secondary research question is: *what are the current roles, functions, and, structure, and organization of the eSBs?* The eSB concept has been in effect for almost a decade. The roundout brigades who failed to gain certification for DESERT STORM no longer exist. They have been replaced by eSBs that are better equipped, better trained, and enjoy a significant amount of interest, focus, and support. An accurate picture of today's eSBs is essential to any measure of the success of this program.

The fourth secondary research question is: *what are the criticisms and endorsements of the eSB's current warfighting roles and functions?* The ARNG's eSBs are assigned significant roles and function in the NMS. The controversy behind the eSB concept, the enduring tension between the Army's active and reserve components, and reports of less than optimal eSB readiness combine to create strong opinions among DOD leadership, the federal government, and commentators on American military affairs. These criticisms and endorsements provide a useful point of departure for the examination of the eSB concept.

The fifth secondary research question is: *what is the eSBs' current, overall state of readiness?* Premobilization readiness is the central indicator of this program's current viability. Any assessment of the success or failure of the eSB concept must be viewed in light of the eSBs ability to perform its warfighting mission.

The sixth secondary research question is *what programs, policies, and initiatives have DOD instituted to improve the readiness and relevance of eSBs?* In an effort to avoid repeating the failure of the roundout brigades, the Army has supported the eSB concept with a variety of means to ensure readiness. To answer the primary research

question, these programs, policies, and initiatives must be described and evaluated in detail.

The seventh secondary research question is: *how has the mobilization and deployment for peace operations impacted on the readiness and relevance of eSBs?* Since the mid-1990s, ARNG divisions and eSBs have been deployed in support of NATO peacekeeping operations in the Balkans. While this type of utilization was not a part of the original eSB concept, these deployments have had a dramatic effect on how eSBs (and the ARNG) are perceived by the Army, DOD, and the American government. This significant development in the evolution of the eSB concept must be explored when the primary research question is considered

The final secondary research question is *what types of resistance would be encountered if changes to the eSB roles, functions, organization, and structures were proposed?* If assertions regarding a lack of eSB readiness are valid, the Department of the Army may consider changing the roles, functions, and requirements that comprise the eSB concept. In light of the concept's controversial origins, such changes would undoubtedly be met with contention from interested parties in the Army, DOD, and government at the federal and state level. Understanding these political debates is critical to understanding and answer to primary research question.

Major Research Focus Areas

This research into the Army's effort to maintain the readiness and relevance of eSBs will require detailed examination of two major research focus areas: eSB readiness and eSB programs, policies, and initiatives.

eSB Readiness

Research into this focus area will provide objective and subjective evaluations of the aggregate level of premobilization combat readiness currently sustained by eSBs. According to the Army, the principal evaluation criteria for eSB postmobilization readiness are proficiency in squad and platoon tactical collective tasks, gunnery, and battle staff operations. A variety of credible sources can provide training readiness assessments drawn from eSB training events. While some of these assessments are published in Army or government reports, former and current serving military and officials involved in the development of the eSB concept can provide useful opinions and evaluations. These assessments comprise the majority of raw evaluative data presented. Conclusions are drawn from this data and testimony. Other readiness indicators, including personnel strength, soldier and leader qualification and equipment modernization have been considered.

eSB Policies, Programs, and Initiatives.

This focus area will include evaluation of the results and success a number of policies and programs the Department of the Army has designed to support the eSB concept. These are Training Support XXI, Integrated Divisions, Bosnia task force, and the Battle Command Training Program (BCTP). As with readiness data, a number of military and civilian experts have examined and commented on the success of these programs. This data has been analyzed for significant facts or trends contributing to the answering the primary or secondary research questions. Significant attention has been paid to the opinions of former and serving participants in these programs. These individuals have been interviewed, in an effort to gather first hand observations

concerning and the success of policies and programs designed to ensure eSB readiness and relevance. Whenever possible, actual unit of case studies concerned with the readiness of eSBs has been examined. Pertinent observations or logical conclusions have been drawn from the information in these case studies and applied to the research effort.

Summary

The eSB concept is a major facet of the DOD Total Force policy and is designed to provide the US military with the required amount of warfighting capability needed to prosecute the NMS. This ten year-old program was born in controversy over the readiness of reserve combat forces, and questions regarding the current readiness of these forces remain. The answer to this thesis's primary research question is designed to provide the reader with conclusions on whether the programs designed by the Army to sustain eSB readiness have been successful and whether this concept is still viable and relevant in today's current strategic environment. All conclusions presented are based on unbiased analysis of existing fact and valid opinion and will be presented in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS

eSB Readiness

The Department of the Army initiated the eSB program in response to indications ARNG combat arms units were unable to maintain desired readiness level prior to mobilization. This lack of premobilization readiness threatened to cause unacceptable delays if ARNG combat forces were needed to fulfill war plans maintained by Unified Combatant Commanders. After the failure of the ARNG's roundout brigades during OPERATION DESERT STORM, the eSBs had attracted the attention of congressional and military leaders. The DOD and Congress have closely monitored the eSBs since their creation in 1993 and current indicator suggest eSBs are struggling to maintain the expected levels of readiness. Despite some improvement since 1993 improvement, ARNG eSBs continue to experience difficulty in meeting training, personnel, and modernization goals (GAO, 2, 2000).

Current eSB Training Readiness

A major indicator of overall unit readiness is the evaluated level of proficiency in key warfighting tasks. Because eSBs are required to deploy no more than ninety days after mobilization, the Department of the Army has assigned eSBs premobilization training standards that are significantly higher than other RC units. All eSBs must maintain collective task proficiency up to platoon level, and combat vehicle gunnery qualification while in a premobilization status. According to eSB training guidance issued by US Army Forces Command (FORSCOM) in 1995, eSB platoons must attain at least

70 percent “trained” or “needs practice” ratings in critical collective battlefield tasks (GAO 1995, 54). This proficiency is evaluated during each eSB's fourteen-day AT period.

To evaluate collective task proficiency, all platoons in eSBs perform a number of collective tasks, which support the eSB's METL. This evaluation consists of lane training using a force-on-force methodology. An opposing force acts to elicit the desired task from each evaluated platoon. Active duty personnel from TSBs develop each lane and serve as Observer/Controller-Trainers (O/CTs).

Mechanized infantry, armor, and cavalry eSBs must ensure all combat vehicle crews successfully qualify on Table VIII gunnery. Table VIII gunnery trains and evaluates a single vehicle crew's abilities to engage stationary and moving targets with turret-mounted weapon systems. Table VIII qualification is conducted during day, night, and other limited visibility conditions from stationary and moving firing vehicles using full-caliber ammunition. Each series of actions and engagements replicate potential battlefield conditions (Army FM 23-1, 1996). The GAO provided the House of Representatives National Security Committee with two reports on eSB readiness in June of 1995 and June of 2000. While some improvement was evident between the two reports, both stated that eSB proficiency in collective tasks and gunnery is problematic.

When eSB platoons were evaluated in collective tasks proficiency in 1993, 14 percent of platoon tasks were rated as fully trained, 25 percent were rated as untrained, and 61 percent as needs practice (GAO 1995, 16). Improvement was evident when evaluated in 1998, as 14 percent of platoon tasks were rated as fully trained, 19 percent were rated as untrained, and 68 percent as needs practice (GAO, 2000, 7). Immediately

after the formation of eSBs in 1993, nine of thirteen tank and mechanized battalions examined failed to meet Army gunnery standards. In 1998, fourteen of twenty-four battalions failed to meet gunnery standards, an eleven percent improvement in five years (GAO 1995, 21).

For an additional example, commentary on eSB training readiness by members of the Army's TSBs is illuminating. TSBs are the critical components of a Department of the Army initiative entitled Training Support XXI. TSBs are composed of battalions, which provide Observer/Controller (OC) packages akin to those at the Army's premier Combat Training Centers (CTCs). The TSBs provide training support to high priority reserve units, including eSBs. While Training Support XXI will be examined in detail later in this chapter, the following comments made by an officer supporting the training of an eSB armor battalion's AT gunnery qualification are noteworthy here:

In May of 1998, when I arrived at my priority National Guard unit [eSB], I asked the Commander if he wanted my team to assist in the training or evaluation of his crews. As we approached the preliminary tank tables, crews were not shooting well. This was due to slow target identification, slow crew duties, and the lack of understanding of the gunnery standards and scenario. On qualification day, scores did not improve. The units only qualified 5 of 30 crews on the first run. Within the next two days, 24 of 25 crews would qualify as "second time qualified" or 'Q2'. Upon the return to home station, the commander, his trainers, and I conducted an AAR. We identified that most companies were not capable of planning, conducting, or evaluation their own training. No true standardized evaluation was conducted IAW FM 17-21-1 [tank gunnery manual] and crew were not properly trained for qualification gunnery. (Cogdall 2000, 14-15)

The poor picture presented in this example is all too common when active duty evaluators are polled for anecdotal testimony about eSB training readiness. Many Training Support XXI personnel doubt that eSBs are capable of meeting their premobilization training goals.

The cause of these training readiness shortcomings are worthy of investigation. Tank and Bradley gunnery are highly technical, complex skill sets, which require frequent exercise to sustain proficiency. Infantry, armored, and cavalry squad, section, and platoon collective tasks are as equally complex and require the successful, repetitive execution of leader, sub-unit, and individual supporting tasks to sustain proficiency. Training both gunnery and collective tasks is resource and time intensive, and require frequent field and live fire training. eSB leaders cite a lack of full-time training support personnel, recruiting and retention shortfalls, and a lack of sufficient tactical training as their primary inhibitors (GAO, 2000, 10).

eSBs are only allocated 39 days and field training time each calendar year. Time required to assemble, move units to training location, issue and prepare vehicles, draw ammunition and supplies, recover from training, and return to garrison consume a number of these thirty-nine days, leaving perhaps too few days are left for thorough and effective gunnery and field training. eSB combat vehicle crews and infantry platoon are provided only four days of preparatory training prior to reporting for their proficiency evaluations during two weeks of summertime AT. When compared to training time allocated to active duty combat arms units, the eSBs are significantly impaired, yet are required to maintain active duty training readiness standards.

ARNG leaders readily acknowledge these systemic obstacles to training readiness and the general accuracy of the pre-mobilization evaluations is rarely challenged.

It is the attainability of these pre-mobilization standards that Guardsmen and some active duty leaders quietly question. Retired Major General George Meade was a former commander of the Army's 10th Mountain Division; an active duty headquarters assigned

an ARNG roundout brigade under the CAPSTONE program in the early 1990s. His thoughts eSB training readiness goals are particularly insightful:

These brigades are not as ready as regular army brigades and they are not going to be. I have always been struck by the illogical nature of some of the discussion and argument that goes with all this. How can they *possibly* be as good? This is part-time work for them. Our Regular team does this full time, every day, goes to NTC regularly deploys, gets a lot of intense supervision. All these guys have other jobs: police officer, fireman, banker, lawyer, lab tech, etc. Could we [the active force] do *their job* just as well if we did it one weekend a month? They don't accomplish the proficiency. . . they need to fight and win against a first rate opponent because they don't do the Army job full time. (Meade 2003)

ARNG leaders also perceive these pre and postmobilization training readiness goals are unrealistic or even impossible to meet. Some of today's ARNG leaders, echoing the distrust of active component intentions expressed after the failed DESERT STORM mobilizations, accuse active component leaders of keeping readiness unattainably high as a veiled political effort to discredit the eSB concept. This friction exists despite the integrative programs the Army has instituted; these programs will be described and analyzed later in this chapter.

In review, evidence suggests eSBs are not succeeding in meeting premobilization training readiness goals. Simply mandating more training days is also not a viable solution as eSB must spend the remaining weekend training drill days conducting deployability checks, training for state missions, and performing routine personnel and supply administration. Actual deployments for domestic support operations and deployments to ongoing peacekeeping operations cannot, and are not, forecasted and planned into eSB training calendars. These missions are becoming even more frequent as the US prosecutes operations to destroy transnational terrorist organizations, conducts

Homeland Security (HLS) operations, and sustains a growing number of concurrent operations other than war. Units and individual augmentees from eSBs routinely participate in these operations, further reducing training time normally allotted for sustaining premobilization task proficiency. Despite slight improvement between 1995 and 1998, eSBs remain insufficiently trained in required premobilization warfighting tasks.

Current eSB Personnel Readiness

Personnel readiness is a second indicator of a military unit's preparedness for combat. eSBs personnel manning requirements are essentially congruent with active duty combat brigades. Like any military unit, eSBs must have enough trained and ready soldiers to man its assigned weapon systems and fill platoon, company, and battalion battle rosters. Without sufficient manning, a unit cannot effectively complete its warfighting tasks. To illustrate, infantry tactical maneuver requires a unit to achieve positional advantage over an enemy force. Inherent to maneuver is the concept of mutual support, in which a unit maneuvers its subunits to support one another with direct or indirect fire, preventing the enemy from maneuvering or firing against the units as a whole (Army FM 3-0 2001, 2-8). Obviously, without sufficient numbers of trained personnel, military organizations cannot operate in accordance with their warfighting doctrine.

There are clear indications that eSBs are struggling to fill their battle rosters with enough trained and ready soldiers in preparation for mobilization and participation in a MCO. A 2000 report to House of Representatives Committee on National Security detailed eSB personnel problems:

The National Guard's goal generally calls for at least 90 percent of the required personnel and 85 percent of the required number of trained personnel and leaders to be available to deploy to a war zone. However, only one brigade reported that they met this goal as of September 1999. The main difficulty for the brigades was in maintaining the requisite number of overall personnel, available to deploy. In September 1999, the brigades were staffed at an average of about 96 percent of required personnel, personnel available to deploy averaged only 82 percent, and the number of trained personnel available to deploy averaged only about 76 percent. (GAO 2000, 9)

In real terms, an eSB mechanized company requires forty-two personnel of various ranks to man its fourteen M2 Bradley Fighting Vehicles (BFVs). If manned to only 76 percent, this company could only field only ten BFVs, enough for two of its three required platoons. This unfortunate statistic is only a part of the picture. The same BFV company is required to field six nine-member squads of dismounted infantrymen, two per each platoon. At 76 percent manning, the company can field only four squads. Anecdotal testimony validates this analysis. During an eSB's BFV gunnery qualification observed by the author during AT in the late 1990s, one company was only capable of fully manning six BFVs, one platoon's worth and the two BFVs in the company's headquarters.

This lack of trained and ready personnel, despite battle rosters supposedly filled over 90 percent, can be explained by examining the percentage of eSB soldiers who are qualified in their Military Occupational Specialty (MOS). Simply put, reserve units like eSBs, enjoy a modicum of success in recruiting and retaining soldiers, but have struggled in getting soldiers duty MOS qualified (DMOSQ), or trained to function in their assigned duty positions. A government-contracted study conducted by the Rand Corporation assembled a snapshot of DMOSQ in a typical reserve unit during the 1990s. As shown in figure 2, only 63 percent of USAR and ARNG soldiers were trained and qualified to perform their assigned MOS. The Army standard for DMOSQ is 85 percent and active

units normally report close to 100 percent DMOSQ. Non-MOS qualified personnel cannot train or deploy with their assigned unit. This kind of personnel shortfall can seriously hinder an eSB's efforts to meet pre-mobilization training proficiency and jeopardizes the likelihood of meeting deployment timelines once a eSB is mobilized for a fast breaking contingency (Orvis, 2002).

While still significantly below the Army's standard, there are some positive trends in DMOSQ levels across the reserve component. The Department of the Army has

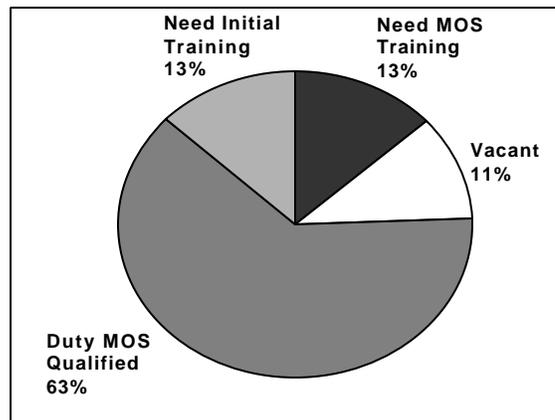


Figure 2. Reserve DMOSQ. *Source:* Enhancing Personnel Readiness in the Army's Reserve Components, (Santa Monica, Rand Corp, 1996).

assembled a list of programs, focused on increasing the effectiveness of the ARNG and USAR. In general terms, these programs are referred to as the Army's AC/RC integration effort. In November of 2001, the Army's Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations (DCSOPS) released a memorandum that announced DMOSQ across the ARNG had increased to

72.6 percent and projected the ARNG would meet the Army goal of 85 percent DMOSQ by 2005 (DSCOPS, 2000). Based on these statistics and projections, it can be safely assumed the Department of the Army and the ARNG may enjoy increased success in filling eSBs with trained soldiers and leaders in the future.

Current eSB Materiel Readiness

eSBs force structures have been designed to replicate the capabilities possessed by active duty light, mechanized, cavalry, and armored brigades. While eSBs possess combat systems comparable or superior to any other military on the globe, US Army active maneuver brigades are provided the most advanced equipment and transfer older equipment to eSBs and other reserve units. While eSBs cannot claim the most advanced equipment available to the American military, army force planners have ensured eSBs possess equipment that is no more than one generation behind active units and have consistently advocated for defense budget allocations which would sustain ARNG and eSB equipment modernization. For example, in the late 1990s, eSB mechanized infantry and cavalry units were equipped with The M2A2 BFVs and M3A2 Cavalry Fighting Vehicles while active units fielded the M2A2ODS and M3A2ODS vehicles. Inspired by performance observations made during the Persian Gulf War in 1991, the principle enhancements present in ODS models include a laser range finder, global positioning technology, an all weather viewer for the driver, and a combat identification system (US Army, 1996). While not as advanced as the ODS model, the M2M2 is still an effective and lethal combat system and capable of rapid upgrade.

DOD and the Department of the Army appear committed to sustaining the materiel readiness of its reserve forces; eSBs in particular. The ARNG's allocation in the

2001 defense budget was the largest in history and included \$206 million for eighteen UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters to continue replacement the ARNG's fleet of obsolete UH-1s. The current Army Chief of Staff, General Eric Shinseki, pledged ARNG units would be equipped with 122 UH-60 and sixty-eight AH-64 Apache attack helicopters by 2002. Other 2001 defense budget allocations for ARNG and eSBs included \$92 million for M2 BFV conversion, M249 squad machine guns, and MK-19 grenade launchers. An additional \$84 million was allocated for radio modernization and replacement of aging ARNG trucks with medium weight tactical vehicles (Kutner, 2002). Since the end of the Vietnam War and the resulting defense revitalization during the late 1970s and 1980s, DOD has maintained a continuous focus on the viability and significance of its reserve forces. This focus, combined with massive American defense purchasing power and formidable domestic defense technological industry, ensure eSBs will be provided with sufficient quantities of modern and effective weapons systems and equipment, now and into the future.

eSB Programs, Policies, and Initiatives

In an effort to repair the perceived shortfalls in the readiness of reserve combat units realized after the Persian Gulf War, the Department of the Army instituted the eSB concept in 1993. This action was one facet in the Army's support of the DOD's post-Vietnam Total Force. This policy required defense planners to seek the most effective mix and integration of active, USAR, and ARNG forces (Duncan 1997, 6). The creator the Total Force concept, Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird, sought to prepare for war against the Soviet Bloc in Europe by maintaining a large number of reserve forces with the capability to rapidly mobilize to augment a small active force structure. Several Army

Chiefs of Staff have formulated and offered supporting concepts to commit the Army to a modern and enhanced vision of the Total Forces concept. Current Army Chief of Staff General Shinseki's concept, entitled "The Army", shares Larid's goal and adds even greater scope (Owens 2001, 1). Marked by frequent inter-component training and planning, Shinseki's concept directs routine use of all the Army's components for major combat operations, small-scale contingencies, and day-to-day, worldwide, peacetime engagement activities (Owens 2001, 2). eSBs are one of the ARNG's primary contributions to the Army's warfighting capability, and a number of AC/RC integration programs have been initiated to keep eSBs ready and relevant. It is the success of these programs that warrants examination.

AC/RC Integration and eSBs

In July of 2000, the GAO issued a report on the progress of the Department of the Army's major AC/RC integration programs. The GAO identified Army's nine most significant integrative programs (see figure 3). Of these, four directly involve eSBs. These are Training Support XXI, Bosnia task force, integrated divisions, and integrated light infantry battalions.

The integrated light infantry battalion program was a two-year test of the Army's old roundout concept, set to begin in October of 1999. Under this program, one rifle company from each active duty light infantry battalion would be replaced with an ARNG rifle company from an eSB, which had previously been a roundout brigade under the CAPSTONE program. This test was not conducted as the Army had rejected the roundout



Figure 3. Army AC/RC Integration Programs (GAO 2000).

concept (GAO 2000, 38). As this program was never realized, it will not be investigated in this thesis.

The Department of the Army maintains another listing of AC/RC integration actions, issues, and initiatives different from the GAO. This list is broader in scope and contains additional entries the GAO did not review. Of these programs, the Army's effort to increase the DMOSQ rates of reserve units was most applicable to eSB readiness and has been addressed earlier in this chapter. Based on Army projections, eSBs have enjoyed a significant increase in DMOSQ and should be capable of attaining the Army standard of 85 percent within three years (DCSOPS 2001, 1). Because poor execution of individual soldier and leader tasks have resulted in eSB units failing to achieve

premobilization training goals in the 1990s, an increase in MOS qualification should have a positive effect on eSBs readiness across the board.

Of the four integration programs designed to improve the readiness and integration of eSBs, the Training Support XXI, integrated divisions, and Bosnia Task Force programs are worthy of the most detailed examination. These programs were developed with the expressed purposes of increasing of eSB readiness and demonstrating the eSB concept remains a viable part of the ARNG's contribution to the Army and the Total Force concept.

Training Support XXI

In the mid-1990s, Army leadership set began an effort to address the failure of CAPSTONE roundout brigades to meet requirements for deployment to the Persian Gulf War. Compliance with congressional ANGCRA legislation served to compel the Army to develop new means to increase the readiness of ARNG combat forces. FORSCOM began a two year concept development initiative seeking to duplicate the dramatic increase in effectiveness active component units were experiencing after a decade of unit rotations to the Army's Combat Training Centers (CTCs) at Fort Irwin and Fort Polk. FORSCOM leaders determined high priority reserve units, eSBs in particular, could benefit from the CTC-quality training experiences active units enjoyed (Fisher 2003). The failures of the DESERT STORM roundout brigades convinced FORSCOM planners ninety days of postmobilization training would not be sufficient time to achieve full operational capability unless eSBs maintain crew, squad, and platoon level of training readiness while in premobilization status.

To meet this goal, FORSCOM created Regional Training Brigades (RTBs) in 1995. Intended as the keystone of an expanding program later to be called Training Support XXI, RTBs were designed to replicate the operations groups that supported active duty unit rotations to the CTCs. (Fisher 2003) The RTB consisted of a brigade staff and subordinate battalions manned by trained and experienced active duty commissioned and non-commissioned officers. The RTB staffs planned tactical lanes training and gunnery qualifications each eSB was required to conduct during respective ATs. As the scheduled AT approached, each RTB battalion would assist a battalion from an eSB as it conducted preparatory training and required prerequisite qualifications. During AT, the RTB's battalions would provide OCs for the battalions in the eSB, similar to role of OCs at the CTCs. The RTBs soon realized the need for their personnel to perform not only CTC OC duties, but to assist eSB's units with training development and assistance. The RTBs appropriately modified these soldiers' duty titles to OC/T, adding a 'T' for "trainer."

RTBs were assigned geographic areas of responsibility, and were responsible for supporting eSBs within those areas. FORSCOM assigned the ten RTBs to the two existing Continental United States Army (CONUSA) headquarters. The CONUSAs had been responsible for facilitating reserve unit mobilizations during the CAPSTONE program and retained this function once the RTBs were established. The RTBs east of the Mississippi were assigned to the 1st CONUSA at Fort Gillem, Georgia, and RTBs west of the Mississippi were assigned the 5th CONUSA at Fort Sam Houston, Texas. The basic RTB organization was dependent on the type of eSBs resident in an RTB's area of responsibility but generally consisted of one or more infantry or armored battalions, and

an engineer or artillery battalion. Each battalion consisted of a battalion headquarters staff and a number of companies consisting OC/T teams comprised of a captain and five to nine sergeants first class and staff sergeants.

According to FORSCOM's plan, the scope of the training support provided by RTB expanded over time. The RTBs were tasked to support not only eSBs, but to assist the high priority combat support and combat service support units resident in an RTB's respective geographic areas. To this end, RTB were renamed TSBs and specialized battalions of logistical trainers were added to the TSB organization. Many of

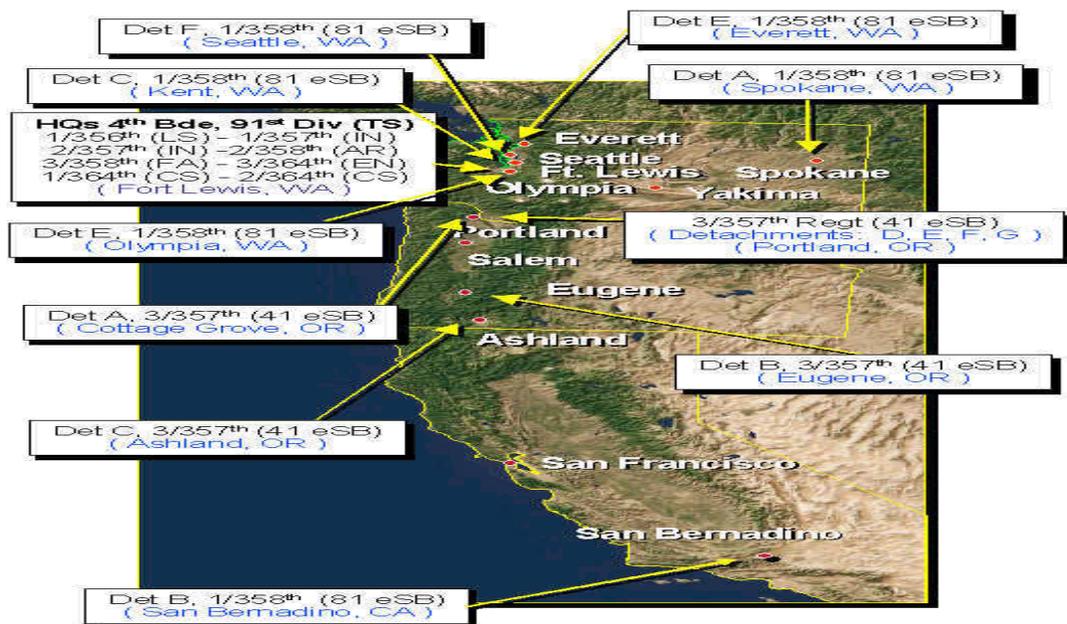


Figure 4. Current Area of Responsibility and Subordinate units of 4th TSB, 91st TSD. *Source:* <http://www.usarc.army.mil/91div/4bde/locations.htm>.

these logistical positions were filled with reserve personnel to further integrate the training support effort (Fisher 2003). Additionally, TSBs were given command of the detachments of active duty trainers FORSCOM had previously stationed within each eSB headquarters under the CAPSTONE program. Now renamed Enhanced Support Battalions (eSBns), these cadres are stationed with each eSB and provide the eSBs exclusive, year-round support and optimize the relationship between the eSBs and the TSBs.

To capitalize on the TSB's efforts, FORSCOM initiated the Training Support XXI program in 1999. Training Support XXI is designed to expand the nature of training support available to high priority reserve units, fully integrate the active and reserve component, and improve reserve readiness. A number of Training Support Divisions were established and given command of several TSBs. Concurrently, USAR exercise divisions were reorganized into Battle Command and Staff Training (BCST) brigades and also assigned to a TSD. These units now provide USAR and ARNG combat support and combat service support units with battle staff training while TSB provide maneuver and gunnery training to eSBs and other reserve combat arms units.

The first goal of Training Support XXI and its associated organizational structures was to continue repairing the eSBs' ability to deploy to and fight a MCO, ninety days after mobilization. A decade has past since the first RTB began supporting eSB AT maneuver lanes and gunnery qualifications. This program was a radical shift in the effort to sustain the Total Army and Total Force policies that the United States military has embraced since 1970. The essential question is: has this program been successful?

Without a full eSB mobilization to evaluate, the first available indicator of this program's success is the measured training proficiency of eSB crews, squads, and platoons. As previously described, the GAO reported that between 1995 and 2000, the number of eSB battalions meeting gunnery standards increased by eleven percent. Furthermore, the number of platoon collective tasks rated as untrained decreased by nine percent. The number of tasks evaluated as practiced and trained increased or stayed the same respectively (GAO, 2002). While modest, this should be interpreted as improvement.

The next available indicator is the number of eSB personnel trained to perform their assigned military specialty or DMOSQ. The Army has announced a 10 percent improvement in this area and projects the ARNG units, including eSBs, will meet the Army standard by 2005. While the benefit of high percentages of trained personnel may seem obvious, ARNG units reap additional readiness advantages. Because federal law restricts the number of days ARNG soldiers can train while in pre-mobilization status to roughly 120, the military schooling needed for DMOSQ comes at the expense of participation in annual gunnery and lanes training. An eSB commander explains this problem in his own words:

Our biggest challenge in meeting pre-mobilization standards is the difficulty in our leaders being present for training due to school requirements, i.e. NCOES and OES. Usually our state training office has funds for our leaders to attend both their required school and our Annual Training period, however, many times the soldier is not able to take that much time away from his civilian job or miss school if he/she is a college student too. (Bailey 2003)

As the number of non-DMOSQ soldiers decreases, more ARNG soldiers are available to attend TSB-supported training. Logically, if more eSB soldiers are DMOSQ and

available to train on gunnery and collective tasks, overall proficiency should continue to increase.

The Training Support XXI program may be having another less tangible but highly significant effect over time. Just as active units have experienced a marked increase in proficiency and training readiness as personnel attended multiple CTC rotations, eSBs should experience a similarly cumulative effect after a decade of integrated and focused training support. As FORSCOM Chief of Staff and 1st CONUSA commander in the mid 1990s, LTG (R) George A. Fisher was one of the key architects and initiators of what is now called the Training Support XXI program. When developing the program, LTG Fisher and his staff knew it would take a long term process to raise the level of readiness in eSBs. They projected that true improvement would begin to be realized eight to ten years after program initiation and both active and reserve trainers, and supported eSB personnel accumulated training and experience (Fisher 2003). The actual start date of Training Support XXI is accepted as occurring in 1995. If the modest readiness improvements recorded between 1995 and 2000 are accepted, assessments of eSB premobilization proficiency made between now and in 2005 may indicate subsequent incremental improvements in readiness.

There are also anecdotal accounts that support assertions the Training Support XXI program is raising eSB readiness levels. Earlier in this chapter, an active duty trainer gave the less than laudatory account of an eSB tank company's gunnery performance at AT. He revises his assessment at the end of the unit's next AT, after he and his OC/Ts had worked with the supported unit for the intervening year:

The scores improved an average of 7.8 points per engagement with 16 of 28 crews first run qualified and all remaining crews Q2. This compared to a year earlier when 5 of 30 qualified first run. Prior to the lane evaluation, the unit rated a 52% P or T rating, after the formal evaluation, the unit's P or T rating improved to 78%. Over the past two years, the platoon's and company leadership has steadily improved. (Cogdall 2000, 18)

eSB commanders also seem to find value in the Training Support XXI program and cite positive impacts on their efforts to meet pre-mobilization goals training. One eSB commander commented:

There are two key ingredients into our recipe for success from the TS XXI structure. The number one ingredient is the AC Training Support Brigade assistance. One battalion of this brigade is co-located in our armories at unit, battalion and brigade level. They provide training assistance and advice to the commander where needed and have been a big help in the development of our TSOPs. The other battalion serves as Observer Controllers [OC/Ts] for all of our collective tactical training and conduct AARs. This gives us the benefit not having to take this resource out-of-hide and allows us to have outside eyes look at how we train and gives us the necessary feedback, both verbally and written as take-home packages to plan future training events. (Bailey 2003)

While not certainly not comprehensive, when combined with other indications of improvement this account is compelling evidence of a program that is experiencing success.

Several of the major obstacles to the success of the Training Support XXI program deserve attention. The personnel used to staff TSBs and other Training Support XXI organizations are drawn from the existing active force. As of 1999, over 5000 active duty personnel support the training of eSBs and other priority RC units (Cogdall 2000, 3). These personnel are mostly senior non-commissioned officers and mid-career officers with valuable operational experience. In single battalion assigned to a TSB, each OC/T has an average of six CTC rotations; one particular TSB claimed 945 NTC rotations among its members (Fisher 2000, 42). Critics contend requiring the active component to

absorb this cost at a time when OPTEMPO is dramatically elevated and operational forces are deploying so frequently is strategically reckless.

Other criticism of Training Support XXI exists in the military establishment. Some argue eSB utilization is unlikely in all but the most extreme strategic circumstance. Citing low eSB readiness levels, these critics see expending vital resources on Training Support XXI as wasteful and question the utility of eSBs and other reserve combat arms forces. Some reserve proponents in the military, Congress, and state government see Training Support XXI as propagating active duty control and manipulation of the reserve force structure. Senior reserve component leaders are haunted by the memory of failed DESERT STORM roundout brigades and the belief the active Army have never truly intended to support the actual utilization of reserve combat forces as designed. Conversely, active duty personnel within Training Support XXI and without, cast doubt on any expectation eSBs will reach a pre-mobilization proficiency level, which will permit an actual deployment to a MRC or MCO. These criticisms pose a significant counterpoint to any reported improvement in eSB readiness or claim eSBs are sufficiently relevant to the NMS.

Bosnia Task Force Program and eSBs

Since 1995, the Army has deployed units and individual personnel to support peacekeeping operations conducted in Bosnia by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's Stabilization Force (SFOR). In an effort to relieve one of the requirements that has increased OPTEMPO for the active force, General Shinseki directed the ARNG's 49th Armored Division to provide the division headquarters for the seventh SFOR rotation from March through October 2000. During this deployment, the 49th Division

commanded active, reserve, and multi-national forces. From 1996 through 1999, over 10,000 ARNG personnel have served in Balkan peacekeeping operations (Doubler 2002). Since SFOR 7, the Army has rotated the ARNG's 29th Division headquarters through SFOR 10 and has provided ARNG units for SFOR 8, 9, 10, and 11, including units from five eSBs. Additional ARNG forces will deploy to Bosnia in April of this year (GAO 2000, 12, 14, 45).

DOD and the Department of the Army tout the success of the Bosnia Task Force program. Army senior leaders and commanders have publicly praised the positive effects created by the presence of ARNG units in Bosnia. One ARNG task force commander asserted American Guardsmen serve as valuable role models to the Bosnia citizenry and other multinational forces; representing a stabilizing, citizen-soldier ethic unfamiliar to many other countries and militaries. An former active duty task force commander expressed a preference for ARNG peacekeepers, saying Guardsmen bring additional civil-military experience to the Bosnia operation, while active forces, “are sometimes a little arrogant towards civilian tasks” (Maddaloni 2000, 19). Other DOD officials have cited increases in morale, recruiting, and retention attributed to the use of ARNG and eSB units in Bosnia and other operational deployments (Maddaloni 2000, 19-20).

The perceived success of ARNG participation in the Bosnia Task Force has resulted in other deployments of eSB units for missions outside of their role stated in the current NMS. In 2002, the Department of the Army began mobilizing infantry battalions from eSBs for peacekeeping duty on the Sinai Peninsula in the Middle East. As a result of the 1978 Camp David Accords, eleven nations have provide troops to the Multinational Force and Observers (MFO) to monitor the cease-fire line established

between Israel and Egypt after the Yom Kippur War in 1973. In January of 2002, an ARNG infantry battalion from Arkansas's 39th eSB was deployed to the MFO, followed by a battalion from Oregon's 41st eSB in July 2002. A battalion from Oklahoma's 45th eSB is scheduled to depart in early 2003 (Rogers 2002). This utilization of eSBs for missions other than augmentation of active duty forces indicates the Army may be re-assessing questioning the utility and relevance of the eSB concept or has yet to address the negative effects of this expansion on the eSB concept.

While these aspects of the Bosnia Task Force program are perceived as beneficial, there are criticisms. Predeployment training for ARNG forces bound for Bosnia has caused the average number of active duty days to exceed Presidential Reserve Call-Up authority by thirty days (Owens 2000, 19). If this trend continues, the financial expense to the National Guard Bureau, and the hardships experience by Guardsmen, their families, and their civilian employers could increase. This would compound current reserve component OPTEMPO concerns caused by ongoing homeland security operations initiated after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. Additionally, the ARNG incurs significant equipment costs during the course of a Bosnia Task Force deployment. According the GAO:

Procurement costs can increase if the Army upgrades reserve equipment to make it compatible with that of deploying active units. Operation and maintenance costs can also increase when reserve equipment is used for more than the normal 39 days per year or when equipment is transferred from one unit to another. For example, the Guard's 49th Armored Division incurred additional equipment costs when it borrowed more than 20 intelligence analyst workstations from the intelligence school at Fort Huachuca, Arizona. The borrowed equipment did not add to procurement costs but it added to total equipment costs because it cost approximately \$400,000 to install the workstations and load the required software. (GAO 2000, 15)

The increase in ARNG and eSB OPTEMPO, and materiel costs caused by the Bosnia task force program, may be components of a larger policy issue. The Bottom Up Review published in 1993 described the fifteen eSBs as, “organized and resourced so that they can be mobilized, trained, and deployed more quickly to the fast-evolving regional conflicts that are anticipated in the future. The brigades will be able to reinforce active combat units in a crisis.” Twenty-two additional brigade-sized ARNG units were to be maintained at a lower level of readiness. These lower priority brigades were to provide rotational forces for extended crises, share burden of peace operations with active forces, provide a foundation if an increase in force structure was required, and provide forces for domestic support operations (Braum 1995, 14-15). In reality, the downsizing of the reserve component and an increase in Total Army overall OPTEMPO, has compelled the Army's leadership to employ eSBs for missions originally assigned to lower priority ARNG units. As eSBs are utilized in these non-standard, non-warfighting roles, they may suffer same degradation in readiness, observed in active units conducting multiple peace operations. The commander of an eSB that recently sent a battalion to SFOR II recently describes the costs associated with this deployment:

Peacekeeping is not one of our METL tasks; therefore the battalion goes for approximately one-year prior doing a train-up and three-month post mob [*sic*] getting reorganized for METL training. It also requires the Traditional Soldiers to be away from their jobs/family/school for an extended period of time. It also takes the battalion out of being deployable for approximately six months upon completion of the deployment to allow the battalion to reorganize it because the Task-Org for these missions doesn't call for a normal MTOE unit. It requires the battalion to pull soldiers from throughout the battalion and even the brigade to meet some of the MOS specific required positions. (Bailey 2003)

In spite of the eSBs stated mission to reinforce active duty forces during MCOs, the Army continues to plan successive eSB deployments to Bosnia and initiates the use of

eSB units for other ongoing contingencies. If this reality is acknowledged, the question of the original eSB concept's viability and validity must be addressed.

Integrated Divisions and Corps Packaging

In 1999 and 2000, The Department of the Army initiated two additional AC/RC integration programs designed to enhance the readiness of eSBs and other reserve units. Under the Integrated Division program the Army re-activated two division headquarters and aligned seven of the fifteen eSBs with them (see figure 4). Under the Corps Packaging program the 7th and 24th Divisions will be assigned to the III Corps and XVIII Airborne Corps respectively. In addition, two eSBs, the 256th Mechanized Brigade and 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment have been aligned with V Corps in Germany (Patterson 2000).

The goal of the integrated division concept is to allow eSBs to deploy more quickly in the event reserve combat forces are needed to response to a future MCO. According to General Shinseki, such, "alignments are going to bring us to a level of readiness we've always talked about getting to." (Patterson 2000) These divisions intend to conduct pre- and postmobilization operations specifically designed to facilitate the effective deployment of their aligned eSBs. These divisions are not tactical units and would not deploy with their eSBs. According to the GAO, eSB leaders have reported significant readiness benefits because of these headquarters; especially improvement in battle staff training and the identification of equipment modernization and compatibility issues (GAO 2000, 29).

Army leaders have experienced difficulty in evaluating the success these headquarters have enjoyed thus far. This may be attributed to the fact the program in its nascent stage;

its measures of effectiveness have only been in place since March of 2000. Additionally, one integrated active duty integrated division commander questioned the validity of readiness data provided by his subordinate eSBs (GAO 2000, 29).

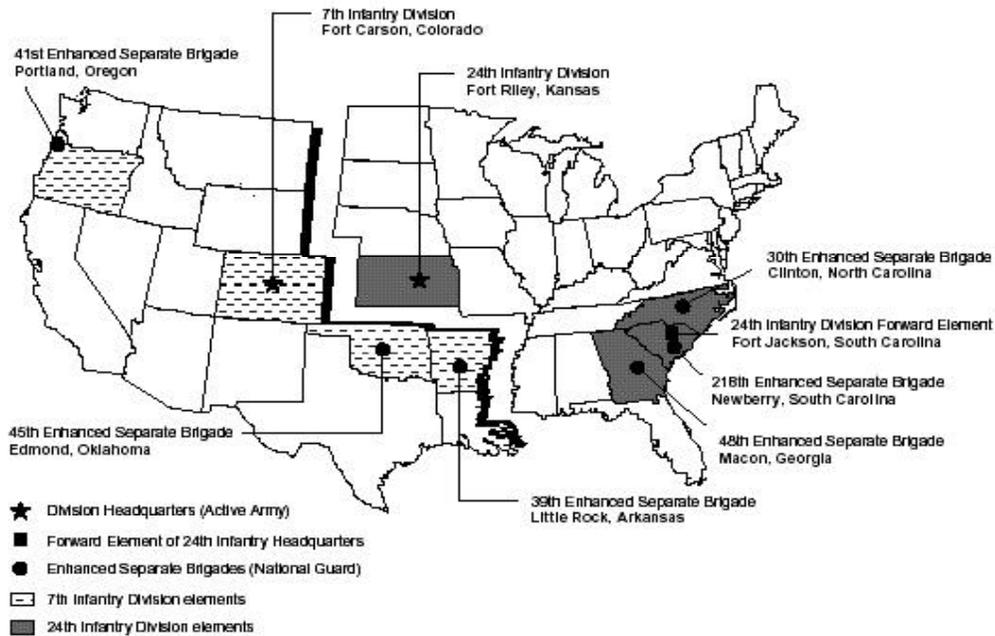


Figure 5. Locations and Alignment of AC Integrated Divisions and eSBs.
 Source: GAO, *Army is Integrating Active and Reserve Combat Forces, but Challenges Remain* (Washington DC: Govt. Printing Office, 2000).

Speaking critically of the program, a former eSB senior leader contends these divisions simply add an additional level of active duty bureaucracy to the business of eSB readiness. Furthermore, he decries the fact these headquarters have no real authority to direct eSB leadership because of the over-riding peacetime command relationship between state governors and their ARNG units under Title 32. A state governor could

trump any integrative measures desired by these divisions if he so desired. Finally, three eSBs are currently undergoing conversion to more modern Force XXI equipment packages. This process decrements each converting eSB's warfighting capabilities and inhibits their ability to participate in the integrated division program as old equipment is turned in and new equipment is fielded (GAO 2000, 29).

Also because of its relative newness, the impact of corps packaging is also unclear at this time. While most of the expected readiness improvement will be attributed to the continued effect of Training Support XXI and the establishment of integrated divisions, corps packaging should create new and beneficial opportunities. Under this program, eSBs can plan and exercise with the active headquarters that will command them, and fight adjacent to them, during a future MCO. As with integrated divisions however, eSB participate in integrated exercises and events with their active duty corps on a voluntary basis only, as their state governors have the final say in most their peacetime activities

BCTP and eSBs

According to current Army doctrine, Battle Command is defined as the exercise of command in operations against a hostile, thinking enemy. Through the art and science of battle command, commanders, aided by their staffs, apply leadership to direct the actions of subordinates and generate combat power (Army 2001, 5-1). Because the Army's leadership considers battle command so critical to success on the battlefield, it created BCTP. Stationed at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, BCTP is one of the four CTCs. This program provides training for brigade, division, and corps commanders, their staffs, major subordinate commanders, and supporting special operations forces throughout the Army. Unlike the dirt CTCs that require units to travel from home station, BCTP trainers

come to each unit's installation and conduct training using computer simulations, OCs, and a replicated opposing force.

While BCTP is not considered one of the Army's AC/RC integration programs, it shares the same goals of raising the proficiency and readiness levels of eSBs. The Army requires each eSB to participate in a BCTP Warfighter exercise every two years; AC divisions and separate brigades annually. When an eSB is trained at BCTP, its subordinate battalion commanders and staffs are also included. Over the course of the two years leading up to a warfighter exercise, BCTP offers eSBs a battle command seminar and a preparatory course. While battle staff proficiency is not one of the eSB measured premobilization training goals, Army officials demand eSBs commanders and staffs sustain a functional levels of battle command proficiency. The inability to effectively train roundout brigades in battle command contributed to the failed mobilization for DESERT STORM (Duncan 1997, 83) and compelled Training Support XXI planners to insist eSB staff train on battle command prior to mobilization (Fisher 2003).

BCTP cadre has formed a number of perceptions regarding the general level of battle command proficiency among the eSB they have recently observed. Overall, BCTP cadres indicate eSBs commanders and staffs perform the most critical battle command tasks poorly. The primary deficiencies observed are an inability to synchronize all battlefield operating systems, maintain situational awareness, and conduct the Military Decision-Making Process effectively. BCTP personnel attribute this to four factors: lack of tactical expertise among commanders, non MOS-qualified officers filling key staff positions, under-manned staff sections, and failure to train on battle staff tasks between

BCTP rotations (BCTP 2002). Observers also note eSBs that focus on battle staff training at home station, and attend the warfighter seminars and preparatory courses, display greater proficiency.

Summary

eSB have faced significant readiness challenges since their creation in the mid-1990s. Despite the initiation of several major integrative programs designed to assist eSB commanders in improving their premobilization proficiency, eSBs cannot claim readiness levels comparable to their active component counterparts. There is however, evidence that indicates some improvement over the course of a decade. While a quick fix was needed after the failure of CAPSTONE roundout brigade during DESERT STORM, the Army chose a methodology designed to have a gradual, long term, more permanent effect. While the use of reserve forces to relieve active duty peacekeeping burdens appears to run tangential to the Army's effort to improve eSB readiness, this practice may be causing positive effects as well. The latest Army programs signal an increase in the scope of eSB integration and may indicate Army leaders are committed to employing eSBs in accordance with the tenets of the current NMS and Total Force policy. In the final chapter, a number of conclusions concerning the current state of eSB readiness, the present and future success of the Army's eSB integrative programs, and the nature of the eSB concept will offered.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A detailed review of the brief history of the eSB concept reveals these units were created amidst controversy. The Department of the Army's failure to ensure the readiness of a major component of DOD's Total Force policy compelled government and Army leaders to institute radical change in force structure. This controversy continues to surround the eSB concept today. The Army expends a significant amount of its limited resources to ensure eSB can meet their readiness goals and fulfill their warfighting role in the NMS. This effort diverts personnel, material, facilities, funds, and time away from the active duty forces and more validated elements in the Army's reserve component. The Army's expenditure of these precious resources makes the readiness of eSBs and the relevance of the eSB concept, so critical to the military, and so vigorously scrutinized and debated.

An examination of the Army's success in this effort reveals two principal concerns. First, eSBs may not possess the adequate pre mobilization readiness required to permit deployment ninety days after being called to active duty. Second, if eSBs are unable to meet requisite pre mobilization goals, the concept may not be an effective use of ARNG units because it does not produce trained and ready reserve forces required augment active duty forces in the event of a MRC or MCO. Like many important and complex issues of national military policy, a review of pertinent facts, observations, analysis and opinion concerning eSBs does not reveal clear cut answers to the concerns

and controversy. Several conclusions can be made however, and these may be useful when any decision to sustain, modify, or replace this concept is entertained.

eSBs cannot currently met premobilization training proficiency goals

Despite recent, modest improvements, most eSBs still fail to meet premobilization training readiness goals. This reality casts doubt on these units' ability to reach the level of capability required for deployment to a MCO. If the empirical data gathered during eSB AT evaluations is considered, it is clear that combat vehicle crews, squads, and platoons assigned to eSBs would require additional training to achieve required proficiency if a full mobilization was conducted tomorrow. If this additional time was taken, eSBs could not finish the required company, battalion, and brigade training within the ninety days allotted for postmobilization training and certification. If the current assessment of overall premobilization readiness is considered valid, the Army must accept the fact that more than ninety days are needed to complete eSB mobilizations. If this unfortunate fact is acknowledged, the Army's reliance on eSBs to augment active forces should be viewed as suspect and the relevance of today's eSBs as questionable.

eSB personnel readiness shortcoming also limit premobilization readiness

eSBs are struggling in several areas of personnel readiness. Firstly, despite optimistic projections, far too many eSB personnel soldiers are still not adequately trained in their assigned MOS. Once a mobilization occurs, there is not enough time to correct these individual training requirements within the ninety days allocated for postmobilization training. Moreover, the failure of eSBs to fill their battle rosters during AT periods has resulted in far few combat vehicle crews, and rifle platoons maintaining the requisite level of proficiency. A large infusion of untrained personnel into an eSB

during a postmobilization training period will demand additional time to retrain crews and platoons. This will likely cause the mobilizing brigade to fail in its attempt to become certified for deployment in the ninety days allocated. Finally, training assessments indicate eSB commanders lack understanding of warfighting tactics and battle command while their staffs cannot sustain proficiency in the Military Decision Making Process and other competencies. These shortcomings are very troubling as the postmobilization training period seems far too brief to permit any significant improvement in these most critical professional skills and battle command functions.

Training Support XXI has increased eSB readiness

The existing relationships established between active and reserve component trainers and eSBs, built through the Training Support XXI program, have resulted in improved proficiency. The Army planners who developed the Training Support XXI program envisioned its success would be realized over the long term. Since the program's initiation in the mid-1990s, modest increases in premobilization gunnery and collective task proficiency have been recorded. If this program is allowed to continue with the Army's current level of focus and resourcing, further incremental increases in proficiency should be realized. A larger success this program can claim is the increased interaction and cooperation between the Army's active and reserve components. Active and reserve personnel now plan and train together in ways unheard of prior to 1993. As years pass and integration continues, the foundation established by Training Support XXI should make future efforts to sustain the readiness of eSBs and other reserve forces exponentially more successful.

Use of eSB units in the Bosnia Task Force is having mixed results

Since 2000, ARNG units have been deployed to US European Command to conduct peacekeeping operations in the former Yugoslavia. ARNG divisional headquarters have commanded active and reserve forces, to include units from eSBs. The Department of the Army has touted the success of this employment of ARNG units, citing a reduction in active duty OPTEMPO and increases in ARNG morale, retention, and integration with the Total Army. While these positive impacts are worthy of consideration, the negative impacts of this sort of employment require attention. Using eSB units for peacekeeping missions is counter to the purpose eSBs were created for: the augmentation of active component for MRC or MCOs. Every day an eSB unit spends deployed to Bosnia, is one less day that can be spent focused on achieving predeployment readiness goals that eSBs have struggled with since their creation. Six-month deployments for peace operations, together with the increased burden of homeland security duties in the United States, and other routine Title 32 tasks, may create negative impacts on ARNG units and personnel similar to those experienced by active component units. If the Army continues to use eSBs force roles outside of their role stated, the eSB concept may become simply "words on a page" of the MNS and irrelevant to US military's efforts to meet its largest strategic requirements.

Eliminating premobilization training goals could make the eSB concept more relevant

After a decade's worth of effort, eSB have been generally unsuccessful in meeting premobilization training goals. In this time, the Army's Training Support XXI program has managed to increase eSB premobilization gunnery and collective task proficiency by about 10 percent. If this trend continues it will take at least twenty years to reach the 80

percent proficiency goal the eSB program was founded on. Millions of dollars have been spent and thousands of personnel have been dedicated to helping the eSBs reach acceptable readiness, yet success remains elusive. It could be argued that requiring eSBs to achieve this level of pre-mobilization training is too ambitious, and based on past performance, unattainable. Citing current eSB evaluations, critics can claim ten years of the eSB concept have not produced reserve combat forces ready to deploy and augment their active duty counterparts. An option worthy of exploration would involve modifying the eSB concept to require these units to maintain only individual skills and MOS qualifications prior to mobilization. The ninety-day deployment deadline could be retired as unrealistic and post-mobilization activities would focus on crew, platoon, and higher-level tasks. Simply put, mobilized eSBs would train as long as required and would only be certified for deployment when a readiness level comparable to an active duty unit was attained. This approach is used when ARNG units prepare for deployment to Bosnia, and could serve a model for a revised eSB concept.

eSB readiness: consider relative rather than absolute scales of readiness

The Army created the eSB program to allow the United States to maintain a modestly small number of active combat forces, backed up by a larger number of reserve units. In this respect, the eSB concept is consistent with the Total Force concept that has driven structure of the American military since the end of the Vietnam War. It is not hard to see why the architects of the Total Force and eSB concepts intended reserve force readiness to be measured on an absolute scale. The Army expects eSBs to attain a level of proficiency congruent to active units shortly after mobilization, as eSBs will be employed side by side with active forces in combat. A review of the success of the eSB program

indicates this absolute scale may present the ARNG with tasks that it cannot feasibly attain. If a reserve force is not capable of performing the battlefield tasks it was created for, it cannot be considered relevant to the strategic challenges faced by the United States.

Another option for the eSB concept would entail accepting the assertion eSBs, while capable of significant contributions to many military operations, are not able to sustain levels of readiness that will allow them to succeed side by side with active forces in a MRC or MCO. The Army could abandon its drive to train eSB to an arguably unattainable parity with active units and adopt a relative scale of readiness. Under this concept, eSBs would be required these units to demonstrate only the capability demanded by a particular employment scenario. The time allotted for postmobilization training would be determined not by an arbitrary deployment deadline but by the time required to demonstrate the requisite level of task proficiency (Meade 2003). Assigning eSBs realistic and attainable strategic roles would ensure their readiness and relevance. Additionally, adopting a more realistic and attainable training readiness goal could defuse some of the tension that still exists between active duty leaders and ARNG leaders. This tension is fueled by the sentiment that active duty leadership still intends to, “set the Guard up for failure” during the next major reserve call-up as they were accused of during the Persian Gulf War mobilizations.

Summary

Throughout American military experience, the Army's reserve component has demonstrated its invaluable role in ensuring strategic and domestic security. The Total Force concept, adopted by DOD at the beginning of its dramatic revitalization effort in the mid-1970s, and has been recognized as the cornerstone of US defense strategy. While

the ARNG has demonstrated effective performance in Bosnia, homeland security operations, and routine support of Title 32 missions, the eSBs' inability to reach readiness goals consummate with their strategic role in a major war is clearly apparent. The effectiveness of Army programs designed to ensure eSB readiness is also debatable. A clear choice is at hand. The Army can modify the eSB concept to keep these forces to relevant across the full spectrum of current strategic requirements or sustain its attempt to raise eSB readiness to level that will allow DOD to put eSBs into a major theater of war in ninety days.

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