



Defense Primer: Department of the Army

Overview

Article I, Section 8, Clause 12 of the Constitution stipulates, “The Congress shall have power ... to raise and support Armies ... make rules for the government and regulation of the land and naval forces ... for calling forth the militia to execute the laws of the Union, suppress insurrections and repel invasions.” The Department of the Army (DA) is one of the three military departments reporting to the Department of Defense (DOD). The Army’s primary mission is to fight and win the nation’s ground wars. The Army’s mission is both operational and institutional, and it is composed of four distinct components: the regular Active component (AC), the reserve components of the United States Army Reserve (USAR), the Army National Guard (ARNG), and Department of the Army civilians (DAC).

- The Regular Army is the full-time, federal force of AC soldiers.
- USAR is a federal reserve force that provides specialized units and capabilities, as well as individual soldiers when mobilized.
- ARNG is a dual-status force that normally remains under the command of state governors and can respond to domestic emergencies, unless its units are mobilized for a federal mission.
- DAC are federal government workers who fill a variety of support roles.

Table I. Army Components

Component	Total Number	Location (CONUS/OCONUS)
AC	471,272	403,291 / 67,981
USAR	198,395	186,354 / 12,041
ARNG	341,589	327,128 / 14,461
DAC	248,810	235,279 / 13,531

Source: Defense Military Manpower Center (DMDC), Military and Civilian Personnel by Service/Agency by State/Country as of September 30, 2016.

Senior Leadership

The DA is headed by a civilian Secretary of the Army (SECARMY) who is appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the U.S. Senate. The SECARMY reports to the Secretary of Defense (SECDEF) and serves as civilian oversight for the U.S. Army and Chief of Staff of the Army. The Chief of Staff of the Army (CSA) is an administrative position at the Pentagon held by a four-star general in the U.S. Army and is a statutory office (10 U.S.C. §3033). The CSA is the chief military advisor and deputy to the SECARMY and serves as a member of the

Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), also a statutory office (10 U.S.C. § 151). The JCS is composed of the DOD’s senior uniformed leaders who advise the President, SECDEF, and Cabinet officials as needed on military issues.

Operational and Institutional Missions

The operational Army—known as the Operational Force—conducts or directly supports the full spectrum of military operations and consists of numbered armies, corps, divisions, brigades and battalions (e.g., Brigade Combat Teams [BCTs], Aviation Brigades, Medical Brigades). The majority of the Army is currently based in the continental United States (CONUS) relying on forward-stationed and rotational units outside the continental U.S. (OCONUS) to deter potential enemies, defend against aggression if needed, and train allies.

The institutional Army supports the operational Army by providing the training, education, and logistics necessary “to raise, train, equip, deploy, and ensure the readiness of all Army forces.” Army organizations whose primary mission is to generate and sustain the Operating Forces (e.g., U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command [TRADOC], U.S. Army Materiel Command [AMC], U.S. Army Intelligence and Security Command [INSCOM]) are also known as the Generating Force. According to the Army’s website, “Without the institutional Army, the operational Army cannot function. Without the operational Army, the institutional Army has no purpose.”

National Commission on the Future of the Army (NCFA)

Title XVII of the Carl Levin and Howard P. “Buck” McKeon National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2015 (P.L. 113-291) established the National Commission on the Future of the Army (NCFA) to conduct a comprehensive study of the structure of the Army. The commission consisted of eight commissioners; four were appointed by Congress and four by the President.

The NCFA reported its findings to Congress and the Administration on January 28, 2016, and made 63 comprehensive recommendations that may or may not be enacted. Among the recommendations were to stop further end-strength cuts; forward-station an armored brigade combat team (ABCT) permanently in Europe; retain an 11th Combat Aviation Brigade (CAB) and station it in Korea; examine identified shortfalls in air and missile defense, chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear defense and field artillery units; keep 24 manned AH-64 Apache attack helicopter battalions (20 in the active Army and 4 in the Army National Guard); streamline recruiting efforts for all three components; use the Guard and Reserve more; and create opportunities for soldiers to serve across the three

components. The Army’s recommendations were sent to the SECDEF in April 2016.

Force of the Future Initiative

On November 1, 2016, Secretary of Defense Ash Carter announced the “Force of the Future” initiative, laying out specific steps to expand the military’s geographic, demographic, and generational reach in recruiting and to strengthen the nation’s Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) programs. Some of the steps include greater exchanges between the military, the private sector, and academia; enhancing the department’s geographic and demographic reach (such as Army outreach to African Americans); providing better support of military families; building a more flexible military officer promotion system; and attracting top civilian talent.

Constitutional Provision

Article I, Section 8, Clause 12, known as the Army Clause. “The Congress shall have Power To ... raise and support Armies ... ”

Relevant Statutes

Title 10, U.S. Code, Subtitle B, Armed Forces: Army
 Title 32, U.S. Code, National Guard

CRS Products

CRS Report R44366, *National Commission on the Future of the Army (NCFA): Background and Issues for Congress*, by Andrew Feickert.

CRS Report R44612, *How Big Should the Army Be? Considerations for Congress*, coordinated by Lawrence Kapp.

Other Resources

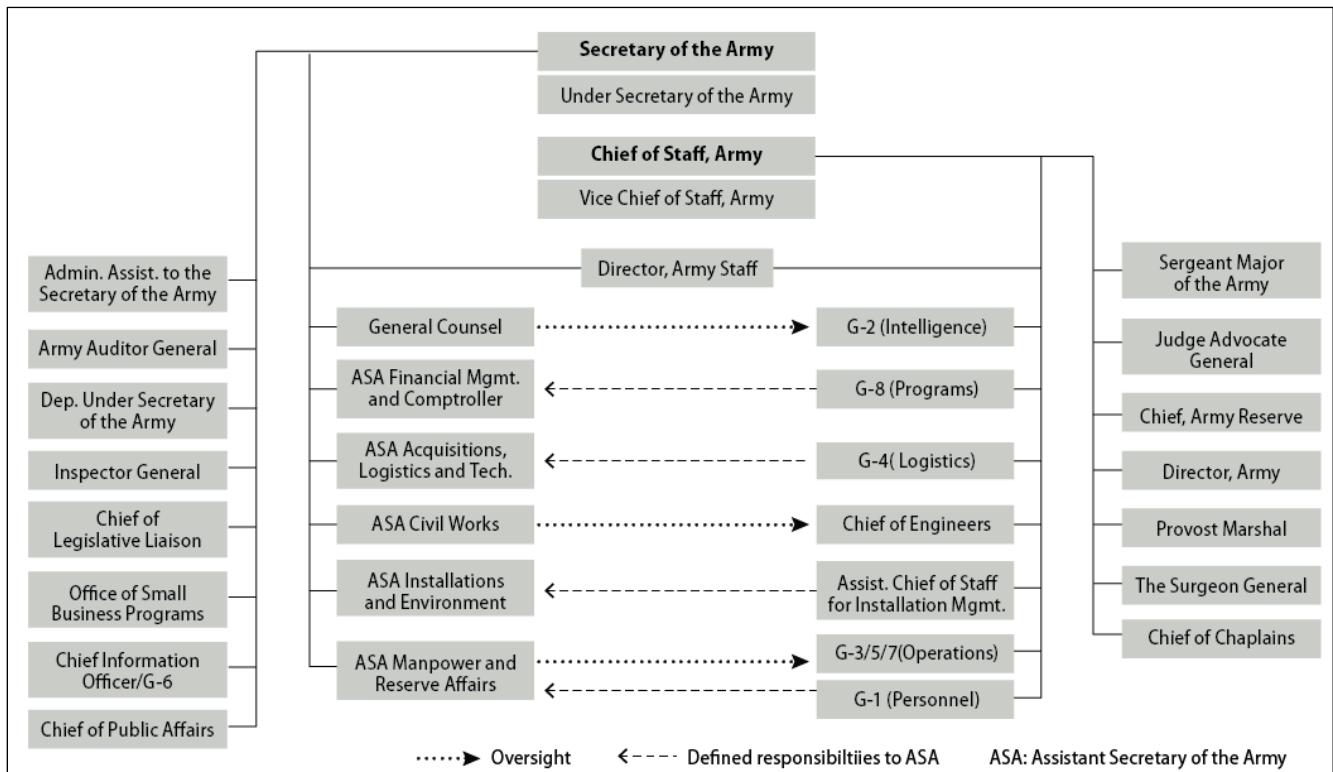
Department of the Army, *FY2017 President’s Budget Highlights*, at <http://asafm.army.mil/Documents/OfficeDocuments/Budget/budgetmaterials/fy17/pbhl.pdf>

Department of the Army Budget Materials at <http://asafm.army.mil/offices/BU/BudgetMat.aspx?OfficeCode=1200>

National Commission on the Future of the Army (NCFA) at <http://www.ncfa.ncr.gov/>

Secretary of Defense, Special Report: Force of the Future Initiative, at http://www.defense.gov/News/Special-Reports/0315_Force-of-the-Future

Figure 1. Department of the Army



Source: Association of the United States Army, Institute of Land Warfare, *Profile of the United States Army*, 2016.

Barbara Salazar Torreon, btorreon@crs.loc.gov, 7-8996
Andrew Feickert, afeickert@crs.loc.gov, 7-7673

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