

# US Army National Guard: Rising to Meet the Challenges of Serving in the Operational Force and Operational Reserve

A Monograph

by

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## Abstract

US Army National Guard: Rising to Meet the Challenges of Serving in the Operational Force and Operational Reserve by LTC Andrew J. Watson, US Army, 38 pages.

In 2008, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates issued policy guidance to the Department of Defense to treat the Reserve Components as part of the operational forces. Four years later, the Department of the Army issued Directive 2012-08 to revise policy for integration of the Active and Reserve Components as part of the Army total force. As part of the total force, the Army National Guard contributes to the full range of missions as within the Army's force generation plans. In this role, Army National Guard Soldiers must offer strategic depth as an operational reserve and retain the ability to sustain contributions to the operational force as required. Changes are necessary to ensure that the total force becomes an increasingly capable warfighting organization possessing the operational capacity to win. Several variables significantly affect the Army National Guard's ability to perform effectively and in a sustainable manner as part of both the operational force and the operational reserve. Among them are cultural bias across the Active and Reserve Components, meaningful alignment of Army National Guard formations with Regular Army units that increases interoperability, budgetary limitations under sequestration that result in unfulfilled promises that weaken trust, and the lack of an integrated personnel management system. This monograph will examine these four areas to summarize some associated challenges and support recommendations that enable the Army National Guard's current role within the Army's operational force while concurrently serving as a cornerstone of an operational reserve comprised of units identified across the Total Force based on tiered levels of the readiness.

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## Acronyms

ABCT	Armor Brigade Combat Team
AC	Active Component
AR	Army Regulation
ARNG	Army National Guard
ARFORGEN	Army Forces Generation
AU	Associated Unit
BCA	Budget Control Act
BCT	Brigade Combat Team
CARL	Combined Arms Research Library
CDU	Critical Dual Use
CEF	Contingency Expeditionary Force
CENTCOM	Central Command
CGSC	US Army Command and General Staff College
CNGB	Chief National Guard Bureau
CNGR	Commission on the National Guard and Reserves
DEF	Deployment Expeditionary Force
DOD	Department of Defense
DODD	Department of Defense Directive
DODI	Department of Defense Instruction
DSCA	Defense Support to Civil Authorities
EOH	Equipment on-Hand
FORSCOM	Forces Command
FY	Fiscal Year
GAO	Government Accountability Office
GCC	Geographic Combatant Commander

HD	Homeland Defense
IBCT	Infantry Brigade Combat Team
IPPS-A	Integrated Personnel and Pay System-Army
IRR	Inactive Ready Reserve
JCS	Joint Chiefs of Staff
MCU	Multi Component Unit
MMAS	Master of Military Art and Science
MTOE	Modified Table of Organization and Equipment
NG	National Guard
NGRER	National Guard and Reserve Equipment Report
NCFA	National Commission on the Future of the Army
NDAA	National Defense Authorization Act
NOS	Notice of Sourcing
OCO	Overseas Contingency Operations
OCONUS	Outside Contiguous United States
PU	Partnered Unit
QDR	Quadrennial Defense Review
RA	Regular Army
RC	Reserve Component
RFPB	Reserve Forces Policy Board
SAMS	School of Advanced Military Studies
SBCT	Stryker Brigade Combat Team
SR	Sustainable Readiness
TRO	Training and Readiness Oversight
USAR	United States Army Reserve
USR	Unit Status Report



## Introduction

We are in fact one Army. We have three components, but it's one Army. We are E Pluribus Unum, in reality of the many come one. We are not 10 divisions, we are 18 divisions. We're not 32 brigades; we're 60 brigades. And we're not 490,000 Soldiers; we are 980,000 American Soldiers. And as we are one nation indivisible, we are in fact one Army indivisible. And I want to reinforce that a hundred times over. And let no mistake about it, I mean what I say, and I say it in every meeting, and every time I hear the word 450 I jump through the ceiling. If I hear the word 490, I jump through the ceiling. If I hear the words '10 divisions,' I lose my mind. It is one Army, and we're not small - we're big. We're very capable. And we're capable because of the reserves, we're capable because of the National Guard.

— General Mark A. Milley, Army Chief of Staff, September 11, 2015.

In 2008, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates issued policy guidance to the Department of Defense to treat the Reserve Components as part of the operational forces while still simultaneously constituting the strategic reserve. Four years later, the Department of the Army issued Directive 2012-08 across the force to revise policy for integration of the Active and Reserve Components as part of the total force. Elements of the operational force: “participate in a full range of missions according to their Services’ force generation plans.” As part of the strategic reserve “units and individuals train or are available for missions per the national defense strategy. As such, the Reserve Components provide strategic depth and are available to transition to operational roles as needed.”<sup>1</sup> This enterprise flexibility is a critical force multiplier that enables the Army to respond not only to the requirements of Combatant Commanders, but to provide the manpower, and equipment necessary to meet the challenges of unexpected emergent force requirements rapidly.

The last time the entire Army National Guard, as the strategic reserve, mobilized occurred prior to the entrance of the United States into World War II as part of the Army of the United States. Subsequently, the last major mobilization of a part of the available National Guard

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<sup>1</sup> US Department of the Army, *Army Directive 2012-08: Army Total Force Policy* (Washington, D.C., September 4, 2012), 8, accessed September 4, 2017, [https://armypubs.army.mil/epubs/DR\\_pubs/DR\\_a/pdf/web/ad2012\\_08.pdf](https://armypubs.army.mil/epubs/DR_pubs/DR_a/pdf/web/ad2012_08.pdf).

divisions in their entirety was during the Korean War. In both instances, although the basic structure of the of the Army National Guard formations provided the underpinning for the initial expansion, mobilizing required augmentation by Regular Army Soldiers as well as new Soldiers generated by Selective Service. With the movement to the All-Volunteer Force in 1972, Selective Service, while still a potential and legal course of action under enduring law, became increasingly viewed as a thoroughly unviable and even taboo possibility from the perspective of Congress, Department of Defense leadership, and the American public.

According to the 2018 National Guard Bureau Posture Statement, the Army National Guard has responsibility for three core missions. These missions are fighting America's wars, defense of the Homeland, and building sustainable partnerships at the local, state, federal and international levels.<sup>2</sup> Moreover these missions occur while concurrently serving as part of the operational force and in conjunction with the legacy responsibility of serving as the strategic reserve. Recently, however, the term strategic reserve is rarely encountered. In its place, the idea of the Reserve Components functioning instead as a land power operational reserve has come into prominence. A substantial portion of the Guard is continually functioning within the cycle of mobilization, deployment, and demobilization that are inherent to being part of the operational force. As a result, what critical challenges exist and how must they be overcome to ensure the Army National Guard remains capable of serving concurrently as a component of the operational force and as a cornerstone of the national land power operational reserve?

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<sup>2</sup> General Joseph L. Lengyel, "2018 National Guard Bureau Posture Statement," 4, accessed January 9, 2018, <http://www.nationalguard.mi./portals/31/Documents/PostureStatements/2018%20National%20Guard%20Bureau%20Posture%20Statement.pdf>.

## The Problem

The demands from the Combatant Commands for Army capabilities are significant and, in many cases, increasing. Yet, the Army is down-sizing. After all we have heard, read, seen, and analyzed, we find that an Army of 980,000 is the minimally sufficient force to meet current and anticipated missions with an acceptable level of national risk. Within that Army of 980,000, the Commission finds that a Regular Army of 450,000, an Army National Guard of 335,000, and an Army Reserve of 195,000 represent, again, the absolute minimums to meet America's national security objectives. However, the reserve components must be resourced to provide both needed operational capability and the strategic depth the nation requires in the event of a full mobilization for unforeseen requirements.

— National Commission on the Future of the Army, *Report to the President and the Congress of the United States*, January 28, 2016.

Senior leaders count on the ability of the Army National Guard to carry out its three chief missions, while concurrently serving as the foundation of the operational reserve. Given the limited number of forces available and the assumption that the Army's end strength will not increase significantly in the coming years, efficiencies must be found, and policy changed, to ensure that the Total Force becomes an increasingly capable warfighting organization that possesses the operational breadth and depth to win in the current strategic environment, as well as counter emergent and unforeseen challenges. There are several variables, however, that significantly affect the Army National Guard's ability to perform effectively and in a sustainable manner as part of the Total Force.

Among these variables are cultural bias across the Active and Reserve Components, alignment of Army National Guard formations with Regular Army units to increase interoperability, budgetary limitations under sequestration that result in unfulfilled promises that weaken trust, and the lack of an integrated personnel management system.<sup>3</sup> This monograph will examine the four areas listed above to summarize several of the associated challenges and support the conclusion that the Army National Guard should not revert to the historic role of a national

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<sup>3</sup> Commission on the National Guard and Reserve. *Transforming the National Guard and Reserves into a 21st-Century Operational Force* (Arlington: January 31), 2008, 2, accessed August 23, 2017. [http://www.ncfa.ncr.gov/sites/default/files/CNGR\\_final-report.pdf](http://www.ncfa.ncr.gov/sites/default/files/CNGR_final-report.pdf).

strategic reserve. Additionally, this monograph provides concluding recommendations on what is necessary to ensure that the Army National Guard retain its current role within the Army's operational force while concurrently serving as a cornerstone of an operational reserve drawn from units across all three Army Components.

## Background

From our nation's inception, its security has depended on the strength of those citizens who took up arms in our defense. They have had many names over the years – minutemen, national guardsman, soldier, sailor, marine, and coastguardsman; volunteer, draftee, and reservist – but they all served our nation when needed. This spirit of service in a constant throughout the reserve components' history of changing requirements and evolving structures. Congress has occasionally adjusted the statutes governing them to better meet national security requirements. The current reliance on the reserve components as an operational force, however, is something entirely new, unforeseen, and unplanned.

— Commission on the National Guard and Reserve, *Transforming the National Guard and Reserves into a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Operational Force*.

The Army National Guard has played a pivotal role in the defense of the United States since well before the birth of the nation. From its humble beginnings as a local militia safeguarding the colony of Massachusetts in 1636 up through present day, it has been reorganized numerous times. These transformations have generally occurred after major conflicts such as the American Civil War, the Spanish-American War, and the First and Second World Wars. In the modern era, reform has been an on-going process throughout the campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the continuing operations against violent extremist organizations. Despite the various restructurings of the National Guard as the United States expanded in both territorial size and population, its core missions have remained largely the same.<sup>4</sup> Currently, under authorities granted within Title 32 of the U.S. Code, both the Army National Guard and Air National Guard provide support to their respective States through orders from the governor, when not federalized. Likewise, the Army National Guard increases the operational capacity of the Regular Army, and

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<sup>4</sup> Barry M. Stentiford, *The American Home Guard: The State Militia in the Twentieth Century* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2002), 5-6.

the Air National Guard increases the operational capacity of the Air Force while activated for federal service under Title 10 of the US Code.<sup>5</sup>

In the months leading up to the entrance of the United States into World War II, all federalized National Guard units were placed on orders, mobilized at camps throughout the country, and reorganized to rapidly expand the land force capacity of the Army and the Army Air Forces. By June 1941, the mass mobilization of the National Guard was well underway and within weeks of the attacks on Pearl Harbor, Hawaii and in the Philippine Islands, the entire Army National Guard was actively involved in expanding the Army of the United States. Of the twenty-nine divisions that the Army was able to begin training and equipping in the opening months of the war, eighteen were National Guard formations. This was a major contribution by any measure and although the Army would eventually grow to ninety-one divisions over the course of the war, those eighteen core divisions, initially manned by Guardsmen would serve with distinction throughout the duration of the war.<sup>6</sup>

Following World War II, Army Chief of Staff General George C. Marshall, sought to expand the National Guard to serve as a proficient and responsive strategic reserve, as the Regular Army reduced greatly in size. Based on recommendations provided by a joint Regular Army and National Guard committee for the role of the National Guard after the war, General Marshall advocated for a smaller standing army of 330,000 Soldiers capable of being augmented by a large pool of draftees who would receive Universal Military Training (UMT) and then serve in Army Reserve and Army National Guard units. When General Dwight D. Eisenhower became the next Army Chief of Staff, however, this plan changed significantly. General Eisenhower

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<sup>5</sup> Reserve Forces Policy Board, *Report for the Transition to the New Administration, Improving the Total Force Using the National Guard and Reserves* (Falls Church: November 1, 2016), 97, accessed 23 August, 2017, [http://rfpb.defense.gov/Portals/67/Documents/Improving%20the%20Total%20Force%20using%20the%20National%20Guard%20and%20Reserves\\_1%20November%202016.pdf?ver=2016-11-17-142718-243](http://rfpb.defense.gov/Portals/67/Documents/Improving%20the%20Total%20Force%20using%20the%20National%20Guard%20and%20Reserves_1%20November%202016.pdf?ver=2016-11-17-142718-243).

<sup>6</sup> John K. Mahon, *History of the Militia and the National Guard* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1983), 183-184.

envisioned that future conflict on a large scale would require a much larger active force than Marshall desired. Additionally, Eisenhower believed that the nation would have little time to prepare the initial combat forces for what he perceived would be a prolonged conflict lasting up to five years.<sup>7</sup>

To this end, General Eisenhower recommended a standing army of more than one million Soldiers with a force in being in the National Guard and Reserves of 680,000 Soldiers as the next line of defense. On paper Congress initially authorized the increase in end strength to 680,000 Soldiers, a great victory in and of itself.<sup>8</sup> The federal budget, however, was insufficient to provide the quantity requested and the Army National Guard struggled to recruit the required personnel. To support recruiting efforts, Congress eventually provided \$1 million a year in federal funding specifically to support the National Guards public affairs campaign and encourage World War II veterans and new recruits alike to join local guard units. By the end of 1949 the membership in the Army National Guard stood at 356,473 located in more than 5,000 armories nation-wide, but never reached the initial goal.<sup>9</sup>

Although these initiatives initially gained headway, efforts to rebalance a smaller active component with a much larger reserve component were stopped in stride by the outbreak of the Korean War. To support the necessary force requirements in Theater, several Army National Guard divisions and numerous supporting units down to the battalion and company level were mobilized for service. Between 1950 and 1953, 138,600 members of the Army National Guard, including eight Divisions, three regimental combat teams and a variety of separate units at the battalion level and below saw service in Korea, Europe and across the United States. Two divisions, the 40<sup>th</sup> and 45<sup>th</sup> Infantry Divisions, did deploy to combat in Korea where they fought

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<sup>7</sup> Mahon, *History of the Militia and the National Guard*, 195-197.

<sup>8</sup> William M. Donnelly, *Under Army Orders: The Army National Guard During the Korean War* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2001), 6-8.

<sup>9</sup> Mahon, *History of the Militia and National Guard*, 199-201.

through numerous campaigns, although most of the initially deployed Guardsmen had rotated out of theater by the time the Armistice was signed. Concurrent to deployments to Korea, the 28<sup>th</sup> and 43<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Divisions were sent to bolster US Army forces in Central Europe for the duration. The 31<sup>st</sup>, 37<sup>th</sup>, 44<sup>th</sup>, and 47<sup>th</sup> divisions remained assigned within the continental United States to deter possible Soviet aggression and safeguard the Homeland.<sup>10</sup> Similar to the experiences of the National Guard units during the Second World War, however, these formations were largely reorganized post mobilization with the majority of existing manning shortfalls filled by Regular Army, recalled Reservists, and draftee Soldiers.

After the signing of the Armistice between the United Nations Command, The Korean People's Army, and the Chinese People's Liberation Army on July 27, 1953, efforts to promote interoperability between the Regular Army and the National Guard lost momentum to the growing concerns over the expansion of communism and the beginning of the nuclear arms race.<sup>11</sup> With the failure to gain popular support for Universal Military Training as anything more than an unratified law on the books since 1951, efforts shifted to a focus on strengthening the Army Reserve at the expense of the National Guard. As a result, infighting intensified between the Regular Army, Army National Guard and Army Reserves over funding allocations and it was not until Congressman Carl Vinson (D – GA), then serving as Chairman of the House Armed Services Commission, intervened and worked to ensure the Army National Guard was able to remain viable, eventually rising to more than 434,000 before being reduced to a new authorized manning level of 400,000 by Congress.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Mahon, *History of the Militia and the National Guard*, 209.

<sup>11</sup> United Nations, *Korean War Armistice Agreement, 1953* (Washington, DC: Treaties and Other International Agreements Series #2782; General Records of the United States Government; Record Group 11, National Archives), accessed January 8, 2018, <https://www.archives.gov/historical-docs/todays-doc/?dod-date=727>.

<sup>12</sup> Mahon, *History of the Militia and the National Guard*, 215-220.

As the United States expanded its presence in support of South Vietnam, the decision was made for political reasons not to employ, with limited exceptions, the Army National Guard and Army Reserve. The policy of refraining from using the Army National Guard in support of the military efforts in Vietnam would, with very few limited exceptions, stand for the duration of the war. As a result, the Army National Guard focused on its role as the foundation of the national military reserve and in service at the state level during this turbulent period in American history. Most commonly the National Guard was utilized in support of State disaster response and supporting law and order operations tied to protests ranging from the involvement of the United States in the war in Vietnam to the Civil Rights movement. The resultant reliance upon volunteers and those drafted through Selective Service to wage the war in Vietnam distanced much of main street America from community connections to the human cost of the conflict. This in turn further widened the gulf between the Army and the people it existed to serve and eventually set the stage for the transition to the All-Volunteer Force and the Total Force Concept.

Based on orders from President Richard Nixon, Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird in August 1970 issued directions to the secretaries of the various military departments to incorporate the total force concept into all aspects of the programming equipping and employment of the reserve forces.<sup>13</sup> In 1971, it was publicly announced that the draft would end, and the last Soldier was drafted in 1972. In 1973, Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger stated that the Total Force Concept had evolved into the Total Force Policy.

Throughout the Cold War, the assumption had been that the Reserve Component would most likely be subject to a total mobilization in case of a scenario involving two fronts such as Korea and Central Europe. It was assumed that in any conflict that would require a rapid increase in end strength where the Regular Army would initially undertake combat operations with the

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<sup>13</sup> Michael Doubler, *Civilian in Peace, Soldier in War: The Army National Guard, 1636-2000* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2003), 277-278.



Reserve Component constituting the follow-on forces in a reinforcing role.<sup>14</sup> This thinking did not change with the adoption of the Total Force Policy and the intent was to find a way to better integrate the active and reserve components. At its core, the effort looked to gain both budgetary efficiency and operation effectiveness by maximizing the potential of existing formations.<sup>15</sup>

Throughout the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s various efforts were undertaken to maximize the potential of the total force policy with little lasting effect. The main initiative across the 1980s, and into the early 1990s was known as CAPSTONE. The intent of both this program was to provide the National Guard with both a peacetime headquarters, managed at the state level, and a wartime headquarters provided by an associated Regular Army unit. Throughout the year, active units and leaders would provide limited support and assistance to their aligned National Guard partners, during the summer Annual Training events. In case of major conflict, the intent was for the Reserve Component brigades to rapidly mobilize and deploy with their associated Active Component division.<sup>16</sup>

In theory, this partnership would enable the National Guard to benefit from the sustained experience levels of their Regular Army counterparts as well as establish professional relationships that would ease integration of forces in the event of mobilization. In practice, however, too little emphasis was placed on the interaction of the components. The primary reason for this was not an intentional lack of effort on the part of either the Regular Army or the National Guard. Rather, the primary reason the concept fell short resulted from the failure by the Department of the Army to provide the necessary time and additional funding required for Regular Army units to best support associated Army National Guard units. The deficiencies of

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<sup>14</sup> Jacob Alex Klerman and RAND Corporation, *Rethinking the Reserves*, 17-18, accessed February 9, 2018, <https://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/MG757.html>.

<sup>15</sup> Stephen M. Duncan, *Citizen Warriors: America's National Guard and Reserve Forces & the Politics of National Security* (Novato: Presidio Press, 1997), 137-142.

<sup>16</sup> Jeffery A. Jacobs, *The Future of the Citizen-Soldier Force: Issues and Answers* (Lexington: The University of Kentucky Press, 1994), 16-19.

CAPSTONE became evident during the early months of the mobilization and staging of forces to operate in support of Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm. As the Army prepared for war in the Persian Gulf, three round-out brigades, the 48<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade from Georgia, the 155<sup>th</sup> Armor Brigade from Mississippi, and the 256<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade from Louisiana were federalized and mobilized for service. Not one of these maneuver brigades, however, deployed to the Middle East.<sup>17</sup>

In the years that followed Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, the Army reevaluated the role of the Reserve Components and focused the majority of the effort on how to structure and utilize the Army National Guard and Army Reserves. Based on the timeline of the war in the Persian Gulf, and the fact that none of the Army National Guard maneuver brigades designated to support Regular Army divisions were deployed, the Department of the Army sought a new model for Active and Reserve component integration. Formalized in 1994 and included in Army Regulation 11-30 *Army Programs*, the new approach was known as WARTRACE.<sup>18</sup> Under this model, Active and Reserve Components remained aligned but instead of a round-out concept where the active division would deploy with their associated Army National Guard unit, the idea was to round-up the division with the guard brigade deploying after the divisions regular brigades.<sup>19</sup> Increased emphasis was also placed on the creation of Regular Army training support brigades comprised of experienced Regular Army personnel focused on advising and evaluating Army National Guard units at every echelon during training and readiness events.

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<sup>17</sup> Dennis Chapman, "Planning for Employment of the Reserve Components: Army Practice, Past and Present," *The Land Warfare Papers*, no. 69 (September, 2008), 5, accessed January 03, 2017, <http://www.ausa.org/SiteCollectionDocuments/ILW%20WebExclusivePubs/Land%20Warfare%20Papers/LWP69.pdf>. 1-4, 6-9, 11-12.

<sup>18</sup> US Department of the Army, *Army Regulation 11-30: Methods for Integrating Regular Army, Army National Guard and Army Reserve Organizations*. Headquarters, Department of the Army, Washington, DC, July 28, 1995, 3.

<sup>19</sup> Alice R. Buchalter and Seth Elan, "Historical Attempts to Reorganize the Reserve Components" (Washington, DC: Library of Congress Federal Research Division, October, 2007), 19-20, accessed February 15, 2018, [https://www.loc.gov/rr/frd/pdf-files/CNGR\\_Reorganization-Reserve-Components.pdf](https://www.loc.gov/rr/frd/pdf-files/CNGR_Reorganization-Reserve-Components.pdf).

It would not be until seven years into the current era of prolonged conflict that the Total Force Policy would significantly be reviewed, and increased emphasis placed expanding the critical role of the reserve components. In the wake of Al Qaida terrorist attacks against the United States, as the country found itself embroiled in its longest conflict since the Vietnam War and without a draft levy under the Selective Service Program available to swell the ranks of the force, the importance of the National Guard in support of missions at home and abroad became even more significant. According to the 2016 National Guard Bureau Posture Statement, since September 11, 2001, nearly 770,000 Guardsmen have been mobilized to serve in the homeland and abroad.<sup>20</sup> As of 2018 that number has grown to over 850,000 personnel, and according to the 2018 National Guard Bureau Posture Statement more than 18,000 members of the Army and Air National Guard are serving on federal status in support of global mission requirements.<sup>21</sup>

The essential contributions of the Army National Guard cannot be fully detailed in this monograph, however, active service by America's self-proclaimed citizen-soldiers has significantly expanded the force to meet Global Combatant Commander requirements. Constant use of Army National Guard units to maintain a strong forward presence has provided the Army with the forces necessary to sustain the high volume of prolonged deployments while resetting and retraining units returning from Theater. Additionally, the individual and collective experience gained as a result of constant utilization of guardsmen has increased the experience and readiness of Army National Guard units to a level not seen since the Korean War.

Following the withdrawal of forces from Iraq in 2011 and as American commitments abroad declined and the capacity of the various agencies under the auspice of the Department of Homeland Security increased, mission requirements for the Regular Army and National Guard

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<sup>20</sup> General Frank J. Grass, "2016 National Guard Bureau Posture Statement," 4, accessed December 19, 2017, <http://www.nationalguard.mil/portals/31/Documents/PostureStatements/2016%20National%20Guard%20Bureau%20Posture%20Statement.pdf>.

<sup>21</sup> Lengyel, "2018 National Guard Bureau Posture Statement," 5.

dropped. As has frequently been the case in the wake of large scale conflict, civilian leaders once again looked to reduce the size of the Armed Forces and the long-standing predisposition towards infighting between the active and Reserve Components raised by competition over dwindling budget allotments was quickly prevalent once again.

With new constraints required by the sequestration imposed by the Budget Control Act of 2011, and the mandate to reduce the Regular Army from 566,000 to as low as 450,000 over several years of downsizing, change was inevitable. To achieve the guidance of senior civilian leadership, the Department of Defense sought once more to streamline the various services and maximize the return on investment in the military. To this end, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates mandated a new review of the Total Force Policy to ensure a downsized military would still be able to enable national security and respond to the wide range of perceived conflict that could be just over the horizon.<sup>22</sup>

Under NDAA 2017, downsizing has halted with a current fiscal year 2017 cap on Regular Army manning levels at 470,000 and the Army National Guard set at 348,000. Although this most recent manning level adjustment has been intended to restore balance across the force, and better enable the Army to source manpower requests to meet global mission requirements, sustaining available forces at this level is hindered by the continuation of sequestration generated by the Budget Control Act of 2011. Moreover, short-term stop gaps such as the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015, have proven insufficient to correct the problem. As a result, although enthusiasm among senior leaders in the Regular Army and the Army National Guard to sustain the Army National Guard's role as part of the operating force remains high, the inability to deliver on many

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<sup>22</sup> David Vergun, "Senior Leaders Explain Army's Drawdown Plan," The Official Homepage of the United States Army, News Archives, Article, July 24, 2014, assessed December 20, 2017, [https://www.army.mil/article/130534/Senior\\_leaders\\_explain\\_Army\\_s\\_drawdown\\_plan/](https://www.army.mil/article/130534/Senior_leaders_explain_Army_s_drawdown_plan/).

of the informal promises for expanded training and deployment opportunities to sustain readiness continues to erode the recently established sense of mutual trust and commonality of purpose.<sup>23</sup>

## Findings

I understand there may be calls by some to increase the Army's active duty strength in 2018 above the President's budget request. I caution that there must be a plan in place to use these additional personnel and to pay for them. Training and readiness are important, even paramount, and maintaining and enhancing the fighting ability of the force we have must take precedence over recruiting a larger force that may not be ready.

— Senator Jack Reed (D-RI), “Senate Armed Service Committee Holds Hearings on Army Posture,” May 25, 2017.

In 2008, the Commission on the National Guard and Reserve produced *Transforming the National Guard and Reserves into a 21<sup>st</sup>-Century Operational Force*. This study contended that based upon on-going requirements for the commitment of Army forces around the globe, the Army National Guard must be reconfigured to serve as part of the operational force. As part of the operational force, selected units of the Army National Guard would mobilize and deploy on a predictable schedule, and in conjunction with Regular Army forces, to better enable sustained missions in support of global Combatant Commands. This paradigm shift would require that the Army National Guard be utilized in a manner that was completely different than the traditional role of a non-mobilized strategic reserve. This vaguely defined mission as a force in being ready to respond to periodic demands for increased levels of available land power had been the mainstay of the Army National Guard throughout the Cold War. Changes to the organization of the National Guard would necessitate a complete restructuring of the force and need to address every aspect from equipping to personnel management to achieve a seamless integration into the Army's role within the total force. The Commission's 448-page report served to inform the Secretary of Defense's decision to order increased emphasis of adhering to the Total Force Policy

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<sup>23</sup> *Hearing before the Senate Armed Service Committee to Receive Testimony on the Posture of the Department of the Army in Review of the Defense Authorization Request for Fiscal Year 2018 and the Future Years Defense Program*, 115<sup>th</sup> Cong., 1st sess., May 25, 2017, 9, accessed December 18, 2017, <http://www.cq.com/doc/congressionaltranscripts-5110936?20>.

and bolstering the ability of the Army National Guard and Reserve to serve as part of the operational force.<sup>24</sup>

In accordance with the directive issued by the Secretary of Defense, in 2012, the Secretary of the Army published Army Directive 2012-08 (Army Total Force Policy) thus providing revised guidance and increased emphasis on the integration of the Active and Reserve Components into the already established Department of Defense Total Force Policy dating back to the 1970s. The Army then set out “to institutionalize, codify, and implement methods to integrate AC and RC through three policy objectives.”<sup>25</sup> The first objective has been to ensure the Army, as a Total Force provides operating and generating forces to meet the requirements of both the National Military Strategy and global Army commitments. Secondly, the Army seeks to integrate whenever possible Regular Army, Army National Guard, and Army Reserve units and the division level and below. Efforts to achieve this include seeking opportunities for collective training at the tactical level prior to Reserve Component mobilization to generate and sustain readiness levels that decrease the amount of time and training necessary upon mobilization. The third policy objective aims to establish and maintain a uniform system of methods and measures to validate the pre-deployment readiness of both Active and Reserve Component Soldiers.<sup>26</sup> To better support this endeavor, the Army has revitalized and greatly expanded efforts to achieve interoperability across the force through three methods of integration described as Partnership Units (PU), Associated Units (AU), and Multiple Component Units (MCU).<sup>27</sup>

Partnership Units are the most flexible and least structured of these arrangements. The Partnership Unit initiative began with a Forces Command memorandum published in 2013. This

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<sup>24</sup> Commission on the National Guard and Reserve, Transforming the National Guard and Reserves into a 21<sup>st</sup>-Century Operational Force, 22-23.

<sup>25</sup> US Army Forces Command, FORSCOM Regulation 220-2: Methods for Integrating Regular Army, Army National Guard and Army Reserve Organizations (Fort Bragg: May 31, 2017), 5.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 5-6.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 4.

was later codified by the Secretary of the Army as an approved method for Active and Reserve Component unit alignment. A Partnership Unit is defined as an arrangement for mutual cooperation based on established relationships between two units. These units may be co-located or geographically separated and generally share similar structure and mission set. Although described as informal relationships, the intent is for Partnered Units to work together and plan mutually beneficial training events and actions such as combined arms maneuver in a field environment and command post exercises to improve staff readiness. These events involve levels of participation that range from individual augmentation to the incorporation of entire units and result in increased staff interoperability, leader development, shared understanding and communicate lessons learned to improve both organizations for future operations.<sup>28</sup> An example of success in the Partnered Unit Endeavor is the association of the 155<sup>th</sup> Armored Brigade Combat Team (ABCT) of the Mississippi Army National Guard and the 3<sup>rd</sup> ABCT of the Regular Army's 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division. Although 3/1 ABCT is assigned to Fort Hood, Texas and the 155<sup>th</sup> ABCT operates out of Camp Shelby, Mississippi, the units have enjoyed a mutually beneficial relationship dating back to the era of round-out brigades and the enhanced readiness brigade concepts. Since the revitalization of this relationship in 2015, the two brigade combat teams have conducted home station unit training together in Mississippi and Texas as well as a combined ABCT rotation at the National Training Center in California.<sup>29</sup>

Associated Units follow a much more structured method and charge the commander of the gaining higher headquarters specified training and readiness oversight of the subordinate unit. An example of this arrangement could be a Regular Army Combat Aviation Brigade as the higher headquarters with an associated Army National Guard Attack and Reconnaissance Aviation

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<sup>28</sup> US Army FORSCOM Regulation 220-2, 7-8.

<sup>29</sup> National Commission on the Future of the Army, "Operation Subcommittee Report, 17 December 2015 Open Meeting." 6-7, accessed December 18, 2017, <http://www.ncfa.ncr.gov/artifact-tags/info-paper.html>.

Company as the subordinate unit. Association is not a specified command relationship. Within this enterprise, both the Active and Reserve Component commanders exercise shared administrative control of selected units.<sup>30</sup> Parent commands, whether Regular Army or Army National Guard, are responsible for ensuring proper manning, equipping and initial readiness of directed personnel within subordinate units to enable readiness for integrated training events with the larger associated unit. The commander of the gaining unit, as the associated higher headquarters, is responsible for approving training programs, reviewing readiness reports, assessing manpower, equipment and training needs of the associated unit, and annually validating the compatibility of associated units. Although Associated Units may not be at the same level of modernization, they are required to be sufficiently upgraded to facilitate interoperability. Moreover, Reserve Component Units may receive additional training days to support mission readiness.<sup>31</sup> A leading example of success in the Associated Unit program is the relationship between the Georgia Army National Guard's 48<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT) and the Army's 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division (ID) in Georgia. Currently, the 3<sup>rd</sup> ID possesses training and readiness oversight of the 48<sup>th</sup> IBCT. In this capacity, they have leveraged the strength of the entire Division staff in support of the 48<sup>th</sup> Brigade to synchronize everything from training progression to equipment fielding. Simultaneously, the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 28<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, a Regular Army unit assigned to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division, is further associated with the 48<sup>th</sup> IBCT, who in turn oversees the battalion's training and readiness.<sup>32</sup>

A Multi Component Unit (MCU) is the most amalgamated organization within the Army Total Force construct. MCUs involve the established of a refined organic unit structure to

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<sup>30</sup> US Army FORSCOM Regulation 220-2, 4.

<sup>31</sup> US Army FORSCOM Regulation 220-2, 14-21.

<sup>32</sup> Captain William Carraway, "Georgia Army Guard Soldiers don 3ID Patch as Part of Associated Unit Program," Guard News, September 19, 2016, accessed February 8, 2018, <http://www.nationalguard.mil/News/Article/948257/georgia-army-guard-soldiers-don-3rd-id-patch-as-part-of-associated-unit-program/>.



facilitate the best possible integration and foster highly effective interoperability.<sup>33</sup> Under the authorities provided for this model, the designated higher unit controls the Modified Tables of Organization and Equipment (MTOE) and develops the entire training and employment program for all assigned personnel from across the three components. For several years, the 100<sup>th</sup> Missile Defense Brigade (Ground-based Missile Defense), has served as the benchmark for this line of effort. Although the brigade headquarters is in Colorado Springs, Colorado, the unit also includes a battalion stationed in Alaska, a sizable detachment in California, and a series of early warning radar systems positioned across the Pacific, European, and Central Global Combatant Commands. The unit serves as a part of a vast array of joint ground, sea and space sensors that support missile systems positioned to interdict and defeat any acquired intercontinental missile threats.<sup>34</sup>

## Cultural Differences Across the Multi-Component Spectrum

Traditional bias and the long standing cultural divide between the Regular Army and the National Guard continues to significantly hinder efforts to sustain the considerable gains made for total force utilization since the onset of the Global War on Terror. Since the battles at Lexington and Concord in 1775, there has been a much-promoted role of the ordinary American citizen temporarily stepping away from his chosen civilian occupation, picking up his musket and powder horn, and stepping out to join comrades defending their community. This frequently referenced image of the iconic minute-man has created a romantic mystic surrounding the Soldiers of the Army National Guard. It has also engendered a mental model that has led to vastly different perspectives of the role the National Guard plays in the defense of the United States.

On one hand, over the years there have been some within the ranks of the Regular Army that viewed the guardsman, at best, as only a part time member of the profession of arms.<sup>35</sup> One

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<sup>33</sup> US Army FORSCOM Regulation 220-2, 4.

<sup>34</sup> National Commission on the Future of the Army, "Operation Subcommittee Report," 5.

<sup>35</sup> Reserve Forces Policy Board, *Report for the Transition to the New Administration: Improving the Total Force Using the National Guard and Reserves*, 32-33.

famous example is that of Emory Upton, a Regular Army Officer with service in the Civil War and across the frontier. As an outspoken Army intellectual in the late nineteenth-century, Upton denounced the role of National Guard forces under individual state control and instead advocated for a federally managed Army reserve system designed to expand the Regular Army when the need for increased manning levels arose.<sup>36</sup> Views of this nature may be attributed to the struggle of proponents, such as George Washington, of maintaining a professional army sufficient to counter likely threats, against the views of leaders such as Thomas Jefferson, who adamantly opposed a large standing army. Looking back at the early years of the Republic, efforts were clearly made to limit the size of the Regular Army to a small standing force, able to deter small levels of aggression, namely preserved threats by hostile Native Americans, and adequate to protect the homeland in times of peace. To prosecute a war then, the might of effort in terms of men and material would come from the people, and the people would be represented through participation in the militia who would serve as the initial core element that a larger, temporary force would be built around.<sup>37</sup>

On the other hand, a common view from the perspective of proponents of the National Guard at the same time who sought a codified role for the National Guard as a federal force, however, asserted that the National Guard was the true strength behind efforts to defend the United States during times of war. There are those that feel that the National Guard is the best link between the ordinary citizen not serving and the larger military establishment. That they were, in fact, the strength behind America's military might. This view point was supported by the role of volunteers during the Civil War, reaffirmed by participation in the Spanish American War,

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<sup>36</sup> Jerry Cooper, *The Rise of the National Guard: The Evolution of the American Militia, 1896-1920*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), 91-93.

<sup>37</sup> Jim Dan Hill, *The Minute Man in Peace and War: A History of the National Guard*, (Harrisburg: The Stackpole Company, 1964), xiii-xiv, 7-9.

and strengthened even more by the involvement of US Volunteer Regiments during the subsequent pacification efforts in the Philippines.<sup>38</sup>

To this day, the critical role that the Army National Guard plays as the face of the military to “main street America,” remains a key public relations point that has been reinforced by both senior Regular Army and National Guard leaders in recent years.<sup>39</sup> As nearly every major conflict has arisen, the National Guard has risen to the challenge and provided critical manpower, experience and other support. As a result, its contributions have reinforced the deeply ingrained narrative that the Guard is the foundation of national defense and the defenders of American liberty. Conversely, as every conflict has drawn to a close, there has been a desire to return to a small standing force bolstered by a robust reserve spread across the width and breadth of the nation. Accompanying this desire has been the deep-seated conviction that the reliance on the National Guard is a foundational strength of the nation and the best way to undertake those military actions deemed legitimate and necessary for the defense of American interests while preventing ill-conceived military ventures. As career Army National Guard Officer, historian, and author Michael Doubler stated in 2008, “citizens have a civic duty and moral obligation to defend their local community and the nation from foreign invaders and domestic threats.”<sup>40</sup>

In reality neither the Army National Guard nor the Regular Army have a monopoly of providing military security for the nation. As noted by the Reserve Forces Policy Board in 2016, it is the very balance of a strong active component and a robust reserve possessing a depth of manpower, experience and equipment that historically have been the bedrock of national

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<sup>38</sup> Cooper, *The Rise of the National Guard: The Evolution of the American Militia, 1896-1920*, 84-86.

<sup>39</sup> General Mark A. Milley, “Remarks to the 138<sup>th</sup> National Guard Association of the United States General Conference and Exhibition” (video of remarks, Baltimore, MD, September 11, 2016), accessed December 18, 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-5BCGPIPtKU>.

<sup>40</sup> Michael D. Doubler, *The National Guard and Reserve: A Reference Handbook* (Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2008), 1.

defense.<sup>41</sup> It is not the proverbial question of the chicken or the egg, but rather a combination of what balance is required between the components as well as a paradigm shift in institutional identification. For example, the time-honored use of the term citizen-soldier itself stands as a roadblock to cultural change. The vast majority of Soldiers, whether, Regular Army, Army National Guard, or Army Reserve, are in fact already citizens and the minority that are not generally seek and obtain their American citizenship during their military service. Overcoming the basic rivalry of component dominance has the potential to provide the momentum to build a new mindset.<sup>42</sup>

In 2012, Lieutenant Colonel Stacy Babcock, writing on the topic of the Army's Total Force Policy for her Army War College Strategic Research Project "A Different Road to Implementation of the Total Force Policy," examined the topic from the perspective of Active and Reserve Component cooperation. Lieutenant Colonel Babcock surmised that achieving a sustainable role of the Army National Guard and Reserves as part of the operational force as directed by the Secretary of Defense would only be possible if senior leaders truly committed to the endeavor and sought to work in conjunction with each. She argued that since the original implementation of the Total Force policy over forty years ago, only limited gains had been made towards fully integrating the various components to work together as one team.<sup>43</sup> Lieutenant Colonel Babcock further asserted that to fully realize the possibilities of the Total Force concept, the long history of cultural bias existing between the Regular Army and the National Guard must be overcome.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Reserve Forces Policy Board, *Report for the Transition to the New Administration: Improving the Total Force Using the National Guard and Reserves*, 31-33.

<sup>42</sup> Raphael S. Cohen, *Demystifying the Citizen Soldier* (Santa Monica: The RAND Corporation, 2015), 5.

<sup>43</sup> Lieutenant Colonel Stacy M. Babcock, *A Different Road to Implementation of the Total Force Policy* (Carlisle Barracks: AWC Strategic Research Project, 2013), 5-6.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

Starting with his Senate Confirmation Hearing in 2015, the current Army Chief of Staff, General Mark A. Milley, has stressed the importance of the Total Force as critical to Army mission readiness. To this end, General Milley has made interoperability between the Active Component and the Reserve Components a leading priority.<sup>45</sup> There are several reasons for this strategic viewpoint. First, for over a decade and a half, Regular Army, Army National Guard and Army Reserves have served side by side at home and abroad. As a result, there is a level of shared trust and mutual understanding that is unprecedented in modern Army history. Second, the long-term impacts of sequestration as a result of the Budget Control Act and the resultant reduced force structure required to operate within approved budgets have made the role of the National Guard as part of the operational force an absolute necessity. Third, since the establishment and proven success of the All-Volunteer Force since the end of the Vietnam War, there is little to no appetite among both military and civilian leadership for the utilization of the Selective Service Program to rapidly expand the strength of the standing Army in the event of a prolonged major conflict.<sup>46</sup>

A number of Congressional leaders, including Senator Joseph Manchin, III (D-WV), a senior member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, have been concerned about the growing reliance of the Army on the use of contractors in support of operations abroad. Senator Manchin has suggested that the National Guard and Reserves could have been better utilized in support of these missions. During General Milley's confirmation hearing, Senator Manchin requested that, if appointed as the Chief of Staff of the Army, General Milley would ensure that the capabilities of the National Guard were examined, and efficiencies found for an expanded role in supporting overseas endeavors in lieu of civilian contractors. This lends further importance to sustaining the

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<sup>45</sup> *Hearing before the Senate Armed Service Commission to Consider the Nomination of General Mark A. Milley, USA, to be Chief of Staff of the Army*, 114th Cong., 1st sess., July 21, 2015 (Video of remarks, Washington, DC, July 21, 2015), accessed September 4, 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LkWF4uSP1kw>.

<sup>46</sup> Milley, "Remarks to the 138<sup>th</sup> National Guard Association of the United States General Conference and Exhibition."

role of the National Guard as a viable asset within the operational force.<sup>47</sup> This continued reliance on forces contributed to the operational force lends itself to the recommendation of the Reserve Forces Policy Board, to formalize the roles and responsibilities of the Army National Guard and Army Reserve to serve as an operational reserve rather than revert to the Cold War model of a strategic reserve.<sup>48</sup>

As the principal Department of Defense agent for land power, the Army must possess a substantial strategic reserve to provide depth to the force in the event of large-scale combat operations. Since it comprises nearly forty percent of the total Army force, the Army National Guard remains a viable component to provide a significant percentage of the units, personnel and equipment to attain this end.<sup>49</sup> The sustainment of a viable strategic reserve is best achieved by ensuring a sizable portion of the Guard rotates through duty as part of the operational force. Concurrent to this, we must accept that a significant segment of the Army National Guard will, at any given time, require additional post-mobilization training, equipment fielding and other resources before assuming missions alongside the Regular Army.

Army National Guard Major Andrew Chandler, then serving as a student in the Army's Advanced Military Studies Program at Fort Leavenworth, KS, arrived at a similar conclusion in his Monograph "The Army National Guard: Part of the Operational Force and Strategic Reserve." Major Chandler asserted the importance of remaining the mission of the Army's strategic reserve while sustaining the role of the Army National Guard as part of the operational force.<sup>50</sup> In support of his argument, Major Chandler highlighted the significant contributions made by

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<sup>47</sup> *Hearing before the Senate Armed Service Commission to Consider the Nomination of General Mark A. Milley, USA, to be Chief of Staff of the Army*, 32-33.

<sup>48</sup> Reserve Forces Policy Board, *Report for the Transition to the New Administration: Improving the Total Force Using the National Guard and Reserves*, 33-35.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 90-92.

<sup>50</sup> Major Andrew Chandler, *The Army National Guard: Part of the Operational Force and the Strategic Reserve* (Fort Leavenworth: SAMS Monograph, 2016).

National Guard units, especially in the recent wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. MAJ Chandler detailed several of the successes and failures experienced as the National Guard has evolved to sustain their role in the operational force while still predominately structured to serve as a strategic reserve.

Although Major Chandler referred several times to the National Guard as a strategic reserve, the focus of his monograph was on recommendations to increase the effectiveness of the National Guard through reorganization and did not substantively address how the National Guard can be both an operational force and a strategic reserve. To achieve balance in the force and enable the Army National Guard to sustain participation in the operational force, it is imperative that the Army formal redefine the meaning of the strategic reserve and formalize the meaning of the operational reserve. It is no longer sufficient for the Army National Guard to be a force in being subject to a partial or total mobilization reliant upon a prolonged period of training and equipping prior to assuming an operational mission.<sup>51</sup>

For nearly one hundred years, the foundational of the idea of the Army National Guard as the nation's strategic reserve was derived from the Dick Act of 1903. That legislation provided significant federal funding and oversight to the National Guard to enable Guardsmen to expand the Regular Army in times of war. Following the employment of the National Guard during the border crisis with Mexico, the National Defense Act of 1916 built upon the Dick Act by formalizing the National Guard as a federal component of the Army with uniform standards for recruiting, pay, equipment, training, and other key areas of readiness.<sup>52</sup> This enabled the relatively rapid mobilization, centralized control for training, and eventually the employment of National Guard formations in Europe during World War I. Subsequently, expanding on lessons

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<sup>51</sup> Reserve Forces Policy Board, *Report for the Transition to the New Administration: Improving the Total Force Using the National Guard and Reserves*, 34-35.

<sup>52</sup> Louis Cantor, "Elihu Root and the National Guard: Friend or Foe?" *Military Affairs*, Vol.33, No. 3, December 1969, 370.

from the war, the National Defense Act of 1920 amended the NDA of 1916 and established the primary framework that has underscored policy from the interwar war years, through the Second World War and the Korean Conflict, across the decades of Cold War, and remains the framework today.<sup>53</sup>

Despite total mobilization in both World Wars and the significant call up during the Korean War, however, the Army National Guard has never supplied the majority of manpower to the service of the nation. Most soldiers trained and employed during these wars came from volunteers and draftees. Then, the real strategic reserve of the United States was resident in its citizenry, not the Regular Army or Army National Guard. In recent conflicts, the Army National Guard has been mobilized on a rotating basis, to augment Regular Army forces in Theater. In fact, it has only been in disaster relief centric operations such as natural disasters and response to the use of a weapon of mass destruction within the Homeland that the Army National Guard has been the lead force supported as required and when requested by elements of the Regular Army and Army Reserve.<sup>54</sup>

## Army National Guard Force Structure and Unit Readiness

As of January 2018, thirty-nine percent of the total Army force resides within the Army National Guard. This includes eight of the eighteen divisions, twenty-seven of fifty-eight brigade combat teams, thirty-seven of seventy-seven multifunctional brigades, eight of nineteen combat aviation brigades and two of the seven Special Forces Groups.<sup>55</sup> Along with numerous other specialized formations, this represents a significant portion of the operational force. According to

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<sup>53</sup> Cooper, *The Rise of the National Guard: The Evolution of the American Militia, 1896-1920*, 173-179.

<sup>54</sup> Reserve Forces Policy Board, *Report for the Transition to the New Administration: Improving the Total Force Using the National Guard and Reserves*, 90-92.

<sup>55</sup> Lengyel, "2018 National Guard Bureau Posture Statement," 10.



the Department of Defense *National Guard and Reserve Equipment Report for Fiscal Year 2018*, to provide viable capabilities and expanded capacity to meet the needs of the force in 2018, the Army National Guard plans to sustain a readiness posture that can provide two Armored or Stryker Brigades and up to four rotary-wing Armed Reconnaissance Battalions within sixty to ninety days following initial notification. Additionally, the Army National Guard stated that it will maintain two division headquarters, two IBCTs and Army Early Response Forces” at an enhanced readiness posture.”<sup>56</sup> Moreover, the Army states in the report that, despite reduced funding levels, at no time in recent history has the Army National Guard been at such a high state of overall readiness. Notwithstanding equipment and personnel shortages, the Army National Guard remains a viable element of the Army Total Force.

For much of the last decade, the Army utilized the Army Forces Generational model (ARFORGEN) to manage the training, deployment, redeployment and reset of forces supporting world-wide contingency operations. Within this framework, the Army National Guard followed a pattern of “train-mobilize-deploy” to achieve the readiness levels necessary to deploy following unit mobilization. Those within the ARFORGEN cycle were designated as either Contingency Expeditionary Forces (CEFs) or Deployment Expeditionary Forces (DEFs), with these designations aligned against their planned use during the Available year.<sup>57</sup> When not notified of a pending mobilization, Army National Guard units reverted to a strategic reserve posture without an assigned mission. In this capacity, they reverted back to state control until once again being ordered to active service. This status outside of the CEF and DEF and without a Notice of Sourcing (NOS), hampers the ability of effected Army National Guard units to focus the conduct

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<sup>56</sup> “National Guard and Reserve Equipment Report for Fiscal year 2018,” Colonel Samuel R. Cook, ed. (Washington, DC.: Department of Defense, March 2017), 1-7.

<sup>57</sup> National Guard Bureau, “Implementing the Army Force Generation Model in the Army National Guard: A Formula for Operational Capacity White Paper, 1 August, 2011, Version 3. Army National Guard Directorate, G5: SPZ,” accessed February 16, 2018, 4, <http://arng.ng.mil/resources/News/Publications/Documents/ARFORGENwhitePaper1aug2011v3g2g.pdf>.

of training on the areas deemed critical by Forces Command (FORSCOM) and the Global Combatant Commands where they may later deploy.<sup>58</sup>

The recent shift from the Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN) model towards the policy of Sustainable Readiness (SR) will also assist with providing senior leaders with more accurate information as to unit readiness. As part of the Sustainable Readiness model, embedded changes to the current model for reporting unit readiness, the Unit Status Report (USR) now allow the unit commander to more subjectively assess the readiness of the organization and relies less on factual knowledge than it does professional opinion. Under the new model, the commander will still be able to provide a professional assessment of the unit's preparedness for operations but will balance this assessment with a number of more statistical facets to support individual commander's claims. This shift facilitates generating realistic force requirements across all three Components of the Army in near real time. This allows for a higher degree of awareness and shared understanding regarding to serve as part of the operational force for current and near-term operations, while also aiding senior leaders to direct the mobilization of the Army National Guard in whole or part to support large-scale operations over a longer period of time.

## Budget Constraints and the Enduring Impact of Sequestration

Since 2011, starting with the Budget Control Act (BCA), the overall military budget has been steadily decreasing and, in many cases, hasty decisions on how to reduce expenses were made in an effort to ensure compliance with mandated spending levels. This was followed by the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012, enacted in January 2013, which, in conjunction with the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013 made substantial changes in BCA funding levels, as did the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013, enacted in December 2014. The Bipartisan Budget Act, approved

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<sup>58</sup> Chandler, *The Army National Guard: Part of the Operational Force and the Strategic Reserve*, 18-19.

in October 2015, resulted in even more budget changes. These budgetary instabilities have created a complex problem where the Army struggles to program effectively within the base budget for the future. As the National Commission on the Future of the Army determined in 2016, “This budget uncertainty adds to the problems created by declining defense spending. From fiscal years 2010 to 2015, total DoD base funding declined by seven percent while Army base funding declined by fourteen percent.”<sup>59</sup> At the same time funding for research and development fell by fifteen percent across the Department of Defense with the Army research and development budget reduced by thirty-five percent.<sup>60</sup>

These decreases in spending have obviously impacted the Army National Guard. Despite being thirty-nine percent of the total force, the Army National Guard usually operates with an annual budget of approximately fifteen billion dollars. This represents twenty-three percent of the Army’s funding allocation. As a result, the cost of sustaining a capable Army National Guard can be viewed as low when assessed against the resources consumed by the Regular Army. Proponents of the Army National Guard habitually use this argument to justify continued funding and sustain current Manning levels. A negative aspect of this argument is that while the cost of supporting the Army National Guard within these funding levels may be appealing to senior leaders, it is detrimental to improving force readiness and hinders the ability of the National Guard to adequately meet the challenge of serving as an operational force and operational or strategic reserve. The comparatively small budget of the Army National Guard also limits training opportunities and equipment modernization as it feels the constraints perhaps even more deeply than the Regular Army. As leaders are forced to make decisions regarding how and where to allocate funding across all three components of the total force, difficult decisions are the norm

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<sup>59</sup> National Commission on the Future of the Army. *Report to the President and the Congress of the United States* (Arlington, VA: January 28, 2016), 2, accessed August 23, 2017, 39. [http://www.ncfa.ncr.gov/sites/default/files/CNGR\\_final-report.pdf](http://www.ncfa.ncr.gov/sites/default/files/CNGR_final-report.pdf)

<sup>60</sup> National Commission on the Future of the Army, *Report to the President and the Congress of the United States*, 39-40.

and there is a definite challenge in ensuring the readiness of the Active and Reserve Components are balanced.<sup>61</sup>

An example of the enduring impacts of decreased military spending, in conjunction with the continued demand for rotational forces across the globe, and recent reductions in end strength has been the consequential decline in unit readiness across both components. As of May 2017, only one-third of the Army's 58 Brigade Combat Teams across both the Regular Army and Army National Guard were ready for deployment in support of decisive combat operations. Even more concerning was the statement that only three Brigade Combat Teams, all Regular Army brigades, were ready to fight immediately.<sup>62</sup>

## A Total Force Personnel Management System

Different systems for personnel management hinder interoperability and limit the ability to achieve cohesion between the Regular Army and the National Guard. In order to enable a culture of one service, major changes need to be made to the personnel system. Recent findings from the *Fiscal Year 2017 Reserve Forces Policy Board Report* published in November 2016 recommended developing one shared system for personnel management across the total force as one key way to improve interoperability and management talent.<sup>63</sup>

The disparate differences between how Regular Army, Army National Guard, and Army Reserve personnel systems induces friction regarding pay and benefits, and further impacts both recruitment and retention of personnel, especially younger Soldiers. Currently, the Department of Defense uses thirty-two separate and distinct categories of duty status to manage the Reserve

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<sup>61</sup> Commission on the National Guard and Reserve, *Transforming the National Guard and Reserves into a 21st-Century Operational Force*, 97.

<sup>62</sup> Congressional Quarterly, "Senate Armed Services Committee Holds Hearings on Army Posture," May 25, 2017, 3, accessed January 18, 2018, Congressional Quarterly, "Senate Armed Services Committee Holds Hearings on Army Posture," May 25, 2017, accessed December 18, 2017, <http://www.cq.com/doc/congressionaltranscripts-5110936?20>.

<sup>63</sup> Reserve Forces Policy Board, *Report for the Transition to the New Administration: Improving the Total Force Using the National Guard and Reserves*, 39-46.

Component. Twenty-seven of these categories apply to the Army and Air National Guard.<sup>64</sup> Reserve Component members resent the difference in accrued benefits that are incurred depending on their individual duty status category and frequently elect not to accept voluntary active duty status. This in turn provides a challenge to filling the ranks and sustaining the ready pool of personnel necessary to accomplish missions as part of the operational force and hinders multi-component cohesion.

In 2016, as a potential measure to correct at least one aspect of this issue and increase recruiting and retention, The National Commission on the Future of the Army, appointed by Congress as part of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015, recommended considering combining the all three recruiting commands within the Army into one organization.<sup>65</sup> To further address this concern the National Commission on the Future of the Army also recommended improved utilization of the Integrated Personnel and Pay System-Army (IPPS-A). Incorporation of all Active and Reserve Components into this web-based system would replace the three separate personnel and pay systems used across the Army Components and allow Soldiers to better understand and manage their pay and benefits throughout their careers.<sup>66</sup>

The development and implementation of a new total force personnel system to better manage the Reserve Component, including the nearly 112,000 members of the Army Inactive Ready Reserve (IRR), would also offer a more efficient major resource to be leveraged as a strategic reserve element to augment the operational force in times of major war or crisis. These trained and experienced Soldiers could be rapidly integrated into mobilizing Army National Guard formations to offset manning shortfalls, potentially decreasing the time required to prepare these formations for active service in a time of crisis.

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<sup>64</sup>Ibid., 42-43.

<sup>65</sup> Reserve Forces Policy Board, *Report for the Transition to the New Administration: Improving the Total Force Using the National Guard and Reserves*, 49-53.

<sup>66</sup> National Commission on the Future of the Army, *Report to the President and the Congress of the United States*, 69-71.

## Conclusion

The bottom line is the United States Army continues to meet all missions required of us and we still remain the best ground combat force in the world. However, as the chairman earlier pointed out, the United States is increasingly being challenged and gaps in both capability and capacity have emerged. You, this Congress, recognized that, and your support in the fiscal year 2017 budget stopped the downward trend in readiness and capacity for the Army. And the Army is making very, very slow and very steady progress but slow progress in our core warfighting skills across the total force, and we still have much, much more work to do to achieve full spectrum readiness and modernization.

— General Mark A. Milley, Army Chief of Staff, May 25, 2017.

In the decade since Secretary of Defense Gates ordered Department of Defense Directive 1200.17 directing change across the Services for the management of Reserve Components as an operating force, there has been a renewed effort by the Army to better manage and employ the Army National Guard and Army Reserve. Although new initiatives have closed some of the gaps in readiness and interoperability, much work remains to be done. The National Commission on the Future of the Army, in its Report to the President and the Congress of the United States in January 2016, rendered insights into the Army National Guard and Army Reserve. The Commission found that given a reduced budget and active force structure, the Army National Guard was the only practical way that the Army could rapidly respond to a major manpower intensive strategic mission. Reliance on the National Guard, however, means that bolstering the size of the force for large-scale or prolonged conflict will need time as forces will need to be identified, mobilized, and upon reaching their initial staging areas, receive additional equipment and training to ensure readiness.<sup>67</sup>

With the increased emphasis on the Total Force Policy and the integration of all components into the operational force, the strategic reserve is no longer a foundational mission of the Reserve Component. It is time to significantly redefine the idea of the composition and role of the strategic reserve, or even to remove the vaguely defined concept of strategic reserve and

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<sup>67</sup> National Commission on the Future of the Army, *Report to the President and the Congress of the United States*, 21.

replace it with a clearly defined operational reserve. A feasible approach to this end could be to designate units, personnel and equipment drawn from across the multi-component spectrum that are at a lower state of readiness than those currently conducting missions in support of Global Combatant Commanders as the operational reserve. Starting with the Armed Forces Reserve Act in 1952, the Reserve Components of the United States Armed Forces have been organized as a tiered system consisting of the Ready Reserve, the Standby Reserve and the Retired Reserve, all grouped under the over-arching, but vaguely defined strategic reserve. Although there have been a number of changes to the management of the Reserve Components over the last five decades, the basic construct of what has been deemed the strategic reserve has remained largely unchanged. Historically, the strategic reserve has only been mobilized once in a generation to support major conflict.<sup>68</sup> With prolonged contingency operations now the new normal, the Reserve Components, including a substantial percentage of the Army National Guard, have been increasingly utilized to augment the operational force in support of the Regular Army. Despite the significant changes to the employment of the Army National Guard and Army Reserves, reference is still made on occasion to their role as the strategic reserve without addressing in detail how this will be achieved.

As Lieutenant General Timothy J. Kadavy, Director of the Army National Guard stated in the *2017 Army National Guard Vision & Strategy*, the Army National Guard firmly embraces the idea of serving as part of the operational force. Continued use of Guardsmen in operational deployments sustains a level of current, practical experience among units, significantly increasing readiness for contingency operations. Additionally, increased reliance on the National Guard ensures a higher level of modernization and equipment readiness and enables interoperability with the Regular Army. Likewise, scheduled employment of Army National Guard units reduces

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<sup>68</sup> Commission on the National Guard and Reserve, *Transforming the National Guard and Reserves into a 21st-Century Operational Force*, E-6.

the stress on Regular Army units by expanding the pool of available forces. Moreover, active participation in national defense has a positive effect by showcasing the achievements of the Army National Guard to the communities that support their service.<sup>69</sup>

The Army has no choice but to find the means to generate and sustain a balance in the force. The Army cannot count on support from either the citizenry or Congress to grow the active duty end strength of the Army without an acknowledged eminent threat to the homeland or US interests abroad that cannot be solved through diplomatic or economic means. Recently, Army leadership have testified that without proper funding and despite the best efforts of senior leaders, the possibility of a “hollow Army” is a reality.<sup>70</sup> Thus, the Army will need to set conditions to go to war solely with the forces immediately available and those that will come into readiness over the course of a short-term mobilization that could range from weeks to months.

It is imperative that the Army National Guard remain a part of the operational force and, in partnership with elements of the Regular Army and the Army Reserve, constitute the backbone of a robust operational reserve. To this end, the term operational reserve must have a clear definition. In 2016, the Reserve Forces Policy Board provided the following recommendation: “An Operational Reserve provides ready capabilities and capacity that are accessible, routinely utilized on a predictable basis, and fully integrated for military missions that are planned, programmed, and budgeted in coordination with the Active Component.”<sup>71</sup>

Inculcating a continued reliance on the National Guard means civilian and military leadership must seek the means to sustain unit and individual readiness across the National Guard

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<sup>69</sup> Lieutenant General Timothy J. Kadavy, “2017 Army National Guard Vision & Strategy,” February 2017, 5.

<sup>70</sup> The Honorable Robert M. Speer, Acting Secretary of the Army, and General Mark A. Milley, Chief of Staff, United States Army, “Statement On the Posture of the United States Army” before the Committee on Armed Services, U.S. Senate, 115<sup>th</sup> Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> Sess., May 25, 2017, accessed December 18, 2017. [https://www.armed-services.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Speer-Milley\\_05-25-17.pdf](https://www.armed-services.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Speer-Milley_05-25-17.pdf).

<sup>71</sup> Reserve Forces Policy Board, *Report for the Transition to the New Administration: Improving the Total Force Using the National Guard and Reserves*, 34-35.



and mandate that the Regular Army work diligently to synchronize efforts to produce the greatest sustainable effect. Given current force manning levels, organizational structure, and budget constraints, the Army National Guard cannot shoulder this task alone. Instead, for the foreseeable future, it will necessitate the collective effort of those Regular Army, Army National Guard, and Army Reserve units and personnel not either currently committed to on-going operations or programmed to shortly enter the operating force.

Similarly, the Regular Army must accept that to truly maximize the utility of the Total Force, an exchange of Army personnel within key billets between the Active and Reserve Components may increase readiness and balance as mobilization progresses. The model applied by the Army on the eve of entering World War II remains valid as the surest option to increase the number of available units quickly. That approach, however, will only succeed by inculcating a belief in one team – one fight in a manner that breaks the paradigms of the past and provides a cohesive, interconnected, and capable force. This will be best accomplished through increasing efforts personnel reform and increased multi component training events will serve as the best binding agent to rapidly achieve the necessary level of cohesion to counter present and future challenges to the United States’ interests.

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