

RAF Concept's Impact on the Movement and Maneuver Warfighting Function

by

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Abstract

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The Army's regionally aligned forces (RAF) concept is a viable approach to provide trained and ready forces to combatant commanders (CCDRs). This paper examines the impact of the RAF concept on the movement and maneuver warfighting function (WfF), specific to a brigade combat team (BCT). The evidence indicates that the RAF concept increases the demand for reconnaissance operations to meet corresponding information requirements. Further examination of the RAF concept and the current Army force generation (ARFORGEN) process suggests that the current system requires adjustment to support an Army-wide readiness management philosophy that prepares RAF-designated forces and maintains a higher level of base readiness across the force. The RAF concept expands the movement and maneuver WfF's role in deterring conflict and shaping the operational environment. An increased exposure to a region will amplify expertise that will better enable maneuver forces to effectively conduct unified land operations.

RAF Concept's Impact on the Movement and Maneuver Warfighting Function

By aligning unit headquarters and rotational units to combatant commands, and tailoring our combatant [sic] training centers and exercises to plan for their greatest contingencies, units will gain invaluable expertise and cultural awareness, and be prepared to meet the regional requirements more rapidly and effectively than ever before.

—General Raymond Odierno¹

The Army's regionally aligned forces (RAF) concept is a viable approach to provide trained and ready forces to combatant commanders (CCDRs) to operationalize the prevent, shape and win strategy. However, viewed through the lens of the movement and maneuver warfighting function, a number of aspects of the concept require further refinement as the Army moves toward developing the future force. The brigade combat team (BCT) is the Army's principle maneuver force and represents the primary focus from which to analyze the RAF concept's impact on the movement and maneuver warfighting function. This paper also examines the impact of the RAF concept on the existing capability or capacity of a BCT to fulfill core maneuver tasks.

The evidence indicates that in addition to existing capability gaps in a BCT's organic reconnaissance force structure, the RAF concept increases the demand for reconnaissance operations to meet corresponding information requirements. The Army should increase a brigade combat team's capability to conduct reconnaissance in order to address this capability gap. Further examination of the RAF concept and the current Army force generation (ARFORGEN) process confirms that the current system requires adjustment. Modification of the ARFORGEN process is required to support an Army-wide readiness management philosophy that prepares RAF-designated forces and maintains a higher level of base readiness across the force.

The RAF concept also expands the movement and maneuver warfighting function's role in deterring conflict and shaping the operational environment. An increased exposure to a region will amplify expertise that will better enable maneuver forces to effectively conduct unified land operations. With additional refinement, brigade combat teams will have the capability and capacity to fully support the RAF concept to provide modernized and ready, tailored land force capabilities to meet the combatant commander's requirements across the range of military operations.

What is the Current Role of Conventional Forces?

The role of conventional forces (CF) evolved over the last decade, expanding the capability and capacity of CF in the current operating environment. For more than ten years of war, the Army has seen lines blur between the traditional roles of conventional forces and special operating forces (SOF). Prior to 2002, foreign internal defense (FID) and relationship-building with indigenous people was solely in the SOF realm. However, many of the tasks that are traditionally associated with special operations forces can also be performed by conventional forces. Recent experience in Iraq and Afghanistan identified the importance for all land forces to have the ability to work in and amongst the people of a host nation. Land forces, both Marines and Soldiers, proved to be adaptable to this reality. They demonstrated exceptional proficiency in executing traditional SOF missions using SOF techniques.²

The new reality is that the land forces in general, (Army, Marines and SOF), have expanded their traditional roles and demonstrated enhanced capability and capacity to perform a wider array of tasks across the range of military operations. This range of military operations is an effective way to describe the type, complexity, and intensity of conflict from security cooperation activities, to limited contingencies, to full scale war.³

The increased demand for conventional forces by combatant commanders (CCDR) to support theater security cooperation activities is an acknowledgement of the expanded role of CF. This new reality requires shedding the old labels that are linked to outdated, traditional roles. The RAF concept provides a starting point to re-examine the role of land forces in support of CCDRs across the spectrum of conflict.

What is RAF?

The regional alignment of forces concept is not well understood across the Army. Contributing to the problem is how the acronym “RAF” is used. There are three ways that the RAF acronym is used by the military profession. First, it is used appropriately to describe a regional alignment of forces as a new sourcing strategy to meet CCDR theater security cooperation (TSC) requirements. Second, RAF can be used as a term for a specific unit considered as service retained, CCMD aligned (SRCA) by the Global Force Management Implementation Guidance (GFMIG) to provide RAF capability to the CCDR. Third, the acronym is used to describe an innovative concept for the role of Army forces in support of CCDRs requirements. Finally, the public evolution of the varying RAF definitions is adding more confusion. The confusion of terminology contributes to headquarters’ disagreements over authorities and responsibilities. For the purpose of this research, the Department of the Army (DA) G-3/5/7 provided the following definition:

Regionally Aligned Forces provide the Combatant Commander with up to Joint Task Force capable headquarters with scalable, tailorable capabilities to enable him to shape the environment. They are those Army units assigned to combatant commands, allocated to a combatant command, and those capabilities distributed and prepared by the Army for combatant command regional missions. [RAF] includes Army Total Force organizations and capabilities which are: forward stationed; operating in a combatant command area of responsibility; supporting from outside the area of responsibility, including providing reach-back; prepared to support

from outside the area of responsibility. Regional missions are driven by combatant command requirements. This requires an understanding of the cultures, geography, languages, and militaries of the countries where they are most likely to be employed, as well as expertise in how to impart military knowledge and skills to others.⁴

Unfortunately, this definition is too broad to be helpful and further promotes confusion because it fails to differentiate RAF as either a sourcing solution, a new concept for addressing the future role of the Army, or as a capability for the joint team. Overall, this definition provides some terminology that may be helpful, but it is not specific enough to provide the critical language necessary to engage in a professional discussion.

A RAF-designated unit is provided under a precise set of authorities to make available specific capabilities to meet CCDR requirements. According to Forces Command (FORSCOM) planners, most active and some reserve component Army units are currently regionally aligned to one of the geographic combatant commands (GCC). These designations consist of assigned, allocated, or service retained, CCMD aligned (SRCA). However, units designated as a global response force (GRF) or contingency headquarters will not be regionally aligned.⁵

A definition provided in a separate DA G-3/5/7 briefing is more concise, stating that the RAF concept is “the U.S. Army’s vision for providing Combatant Commanders (CCDRs) with tailored, responsive and consistently available Army forces, to include JTF capable headquarters.”⁶ This definition is more useful in addressing the RAF concept as a resourcing strategy for how the Army provides trained and ready forces. In order to create a more clear and shared understanding of the many faces of RAF, the Army should better clarify the terminology and corresponding definitions.

Prior to conducting an examination of the impact that the RAF concept has on the movement and maneuver warfighting function, a review of additional definitions and terms is required to create a common language and understanding throughout this paper. A warfighting function (WfF) provides a method to categorize a group of common critical tasks into a format that is used to analyze, synchronize and describe capabilities.⁷ In its simplest form, the movement and maneuver WfF encompasses the tasks and systems that place forces in a position of relative advantage over the enemy. Maneuver forces' ability to close with an enemy is aided through the employment of direct and joint fires. The Army's movement and maneuver conceptual framework states that Army forces are maneuver-focused with specific units capable of gaining a positional advantage.⁸ This WfF also encompasses force projection as a means to gain positional advantage over the enemy.⁹

As a joint function, the joint doctrine's definition of movement and maneuver further expands our understanding of the WfF. It describes the joint function's role at the strategic, operational and tactical levels and states that maneuver is conducted in relation to an enemy's center of gravity (COG).¹⁰ Through a synthesis of these definitions, this study can begin to investigate the impact of the RAF concept on the movement and maneuver warfighting function.

The Impact of the RAF Concept on the Movement and Maneuver WfF

The RAF concept and the associated capability it promises to deliver to a CCDR provide both opportunities and increased challenges for the movement and maneuver warfighting function (WfF). The concept provides an approach to expand movement and maneuver's role in preventing conflict and shaping the operational environment.

Additionally, the RAF concept will increase regional expertise that will better enable maneuver forces to effectively conduct decisive operations to win the nation's wars.

One of the misperceptions about the RAF concept is that it is strictly a method for providing a dedicated force to a GCC to conduct theater security cooperation activities. Contributing to the misperception are the rules for employing a RAF-designated force in security cooperation activities, such as requiring a CDR to gain permission from the Secretary of Defense (SECDEF) to employ the SRCA forces in activities other than TSC activities. However, the concept does allow for the possibility of a RAF-designated force to conduct combat operations. A challenge for the movement and maneuver WfF will be how to provide the capability promised by the RAF concept in terms of training, structure, and readiness.

The requirements of the RAF concept on the movement and maneuver warfighting function's expanded role is best captured by the Army Chief of Staff's (CSA) phrase "prevent, shape and win." The CSA uses the phrase to describe his vision of the three roles for the Army.¹¹ Furthermore, both of the CSA's prevent and shape role descriptions nest with the tasks in joint operations phase 0 (shape) and phase I (deter) definitions in joint doctrine.¹² The RAF concept operationalizes the capability and capacity to fulfill these land force roles in support of a joint commander.

Implied in the CSA's vision is the maneuver force's role in preventing conflict by serving as a visible forward-deployed deterrent to potential adversaries. In order to provide a credible deterrence, the Army must maintain a modern, trained, and ready regionally aligned force that provides decisive land power to a CDR as part of the joint force, capable of defeating any potential adversary. Effective deterrence provides the

strength behind diplomacy to potential rivals or enemies. Therefore, maneuver forces must ensure a high level of proficiency in their WfF's core tasks in order to maintain the capability and readiness that enables the military to be a credible element of national power.¹³

A regionally aligned force carries out the Army's role in shaping the global security environment to set conditions ahead of a potential crisis. The CCDRs accomplish this by building relationships that increase partners' or allies' capacity and provides the U.S. access by establishing relationships ahead of crisis. This role slightly increases the training requirements of maneuver forces to develop some level of proficiency in regional familiarity, cultural understanding, and possibly basic language skills. An additional requirement is to develop leaders who are capable of teaching military skills to partner nations in support of security cooperation activities. Maneuver forces will be required to conduct key enabling activities such as reconnaissance tasks in a friendly country to gather information to better understand the infrastructure, terrain and attitudes of the population. Using a maneuver force in an expanded role to get ahead of a crisis acknowledges the expertise and capability developed in the Army's maneuver forces over the past ten years of war. The military is past the old "break glass in case of war" mentality for the employment of conventional maneuver forces. The RAF concept enables CCDRs' TSC plans that are designed to shape the security environment.

The third imperative role in the CSA's vision is "win." It captures the essence of the core role of the Army to provide land power in combination with the joint force to fight and win our nation's wars. Maneuver forces derive their core WfF tasks from their

ultimate requirement to “win” in a combat environment. An additional expectation of maneuver forces is to contribute to achieve victory in a manner that mitigates risk to the force and takes measures to preclude a long-term conflict.¹⁴

Movement and Maneuver WfF forces executing the RAF concept in prevent, shape and win roles will be further challenged by the nature of the environment. The Army’s Capstone Concept (ACC) provides a description of the characteristics of the anticipated future environment, which is characterized as volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (VUCA).¹⁵ In addition to the VUCA environment, there exists an increased likelihood that operations will be conducted amongst the civilian population. Any new situation or environment has the potential to be complex due to unforeseen friction, chance, perceptions, lack of information and unfamiliarity with the physical and human terrain. This anticipated future places additional emphasis on developing the capability and capacity of movement and maneuver WfF forces performing RAF missions to reduce or mitigate the effects of a VUCA environment.

Additional requirements placed on the movement and maneuver WfF by the RAF concept fall in the areas of training, building increased capacity in force structure, and managing readiness in a fiscally-constrained environment. In order to provide shape and substance to the requirements generated by the RAF concept, a comparison between the capabilities of a known maneuver force, a BCT, to what is expected of a RAF-designated unit operating in a VUCA environment is required to determine if gaps exist. A detailed gap analysis will be provided later in this study.

The BCT as the Primary Movement and Maneuver WfF Organization

The RAF concept relies heavily on the movement and maneuver WfF to provide CCDRs credible deterrent options, support to theater security cooperation plans, and a

land force capable of delivering decisive victory in conflict. The brigade combat team is the Army's primary ground maneuver force and the combat aviation brigade (CAB) is the Army's supporting air movement and maneuver force. General Odierno's strategic vision for the Army provides the best description of a RAF-designated unit and a sound entry point to broadly understand the requirements of such a force:

It is uniquely organized with the capability and capacity to provide expeditionary, decisive land power to the Joint Force and ready to perform across the range of military operations to Prevent, Shape and Win in support of Combatant Commanders to defend the Nation and its interests at home and abroad, both today and against emerging threats.¹⁶

This vision creates the expectation that the Army will provide a multi-functional capability in a single unit to a CCDR. As examined through the movement and maneuver warfighting function (WfF), the CSA's vision of a RAF-designated force is descriptive of the Army's principle combined arms maneuver force, the brigade combat team.

The doctrinal role of the BCT aligns with elements of the CSA's vision for the Army. Field Manual 3-90.6, *Brigade Combat Team*, provides the following description of a BCT's capabilities and its role in the movement and maneuver warfighting function is readily apparent:

Heavy, Infantry, and Stryker Brigade Combat Teams are the Army's combat power building blocks for maneuver, and the smallest combined arms units that can be committed independently. BCTs conduct offensive, defensive, stability and civil support operations. Their core mission is to close with the enemy by means of fire and maneuver to destroy or capture enemy forces, or to repel enemy attacks by fire, close combat, and counterattack. The BCT can fight without augmentation, but it also can be tailored to meet the precise needs of its missions. BCTs conduct expeditionary deployment and integrate the efforts of the Army with military and civilian, joint and multinational partners.¹⁷

The descriptions provided by the CSA's vision and doctrine support the notion that a BCT is the maneuver force that contains the greater part of the capability required by the RAF concept. Furthermore, doctrine asserts that a BCT is the Army's primary maneuver force that is capable of executing the core movement and maneuver warfighting function tasks along the range of military operations in a joint environment. A BCT is also capable of expeditionary operations and can be scaled to the exact requirements of the mission. The doctrinal description of a BCT not only specifies the unit's role in "win" operations, but also implies that it can also conduct prevent and shape activities. The BCT's doctrinal role supports examining it as the Army's chief maneuver force to identify gaps between current capability and capacity and the requirements of the RAF concept.

The Brigade Combat Team as a Designated Regionally Aligned Force

There are three types of BCTs: armor brigade combat teams (ABCT), infantry brigade combat teams (IBCT) and stryker brigade combat teams (SBCT).¹⁸ Each type of unit has a unique modified table of organization and equipment (MTO&E). The acronym "BCT" is used from this point forward as a way to collectively describe all three types of units.

The capabilities organic in a BCT structure make it the RAF sourcing unit of choice for combatant commanders. A BCT is the Army's primary land domain maneuver force and is organized as a combined arms team. The MTO&E organization provides commanders the flexibility to internally task organize for squad through brigade-level missions within their capacity. A BCT is organized with the requisite level of leadership to provide mission command for independent operations of the organic, combat-arms maneuver forces, enabling forces, fires, and functional support units.

Furthermore, a BCT that has achieved a proficient level of training on the decisive action core competencies is also capable, with limited additional training, to conduct tasks associated with prevent and shape activities. Decisive action is a term to describe how land forces conduct decisive and sustainable operations with the simultaneous conduct of offense, defense and stability tasks, and possibly defense support of civilian authorities (DSCA) as they apply to the environment and mission.¹⁹

Brigade combat teams are capable of self sustainment for up to 96 hours and doctrinally require only limited external augmentation to be able to conduct the full range of military operations.²⁰ The recent MTO&E change to the BCT force structure eliminated the organic capability of military police and air defense, and reduced the intelligence and communications personnel.²¹ This loss of capability will increase a BCT's need for augmentation in order to provide the full warfighting function capability promised to a CCDR by the RAF concept.

Despite the significant capability resident in a RAF-designated brigade combat team, a capacity gap exists in the organization's ability to conduct reconnaissance and security operations in the current and anticipated operating environment. This gap can be attributed to an insufficient number of organic reconnaissance forces. The recently published fiscal year (FY) 2014 MTO&E provided a third organic maneuver battalion to IBCTs and ABCTs without a corresponding increase in reconnaissance forces. The disparate ratio of reconnaissance to maneuver units in a BCT does not correspond to the increased demand for reconnaissance operations generated by the RAF concept.

After more than a decade of war, the Army is in a state of transition and must consider how to address capability and capacity gaps in order to meet the requirements

of the future. The challenge for military planners and force developers is to translate the requirements of the RAF concept in conjunction with a VUCA future into capabilities that support the CCDR's requirements. The Army should provide due diligence today to ensure we have the BCT structure optimized to address the requirements expected of a RAF-designated BCT operating in a VUCA environment.

Capability Analysis

A framework used by force developers and commonly understood by the military acronym DOTMLPF (Doctrine, Organization, Training, Materiel, Leadership and Education, Personnel, Facilities) serves as the construct to further narrow this study. The focus of the analysis that follows remains on the maneuver BCT as the primary Army organization that will execute the RAF concept, and the substance of the analysis focuses on doctrine, organization and training. Additionally, the evaluation discusses the movement and maneuver WfF's expanded role in doctrine and proposes that reconnaissance be classified as a warfighting function. Furthermore, the study provides a close look at the capacity gap created by an insufficient ratio of reconnaissance to maneuver forces and provides a recommendation to standardize reconnaissance formations across all BCTs. The training analysis centers on adjusting the conditions in which movement and maneuver tasks are performed. More significantly, the study closely examines and provides a recommendation to modify the ARFORGEN training model from a 24-month to a 36-month model and the manning policy from 36-month to 48-month standard tours. Overall, the RAF concept does not have the same impact on each movement and maneuver aspect of DOTMLPF.

Doctrine

In general, the movement and maneuver warfighting function's tasks in doctrine adequately address a RAF-designated BCT in supporting the RAF concept. However, there are two areas that require additional doctrinal attention. First, an increased demand for information created by the anticipated RAF operating environment should generate a new examination of the role of reconnaissance. Second, training manuals must modify the conditions within which movement and maneuver tasks are performed in support of the RAF concept.

Army doctrine already provides significant depth to the movement and maneuver WfFs "win" role. The recently-published Army Doctrinal Publication 1, *The Army*, further specifies the critical nature of the role that Army land power performs in deterring potential adversaries, effectively supporting the prevent role of the RAF concept.²² Additionally, ADP 1 portrays the critical nature of shaping activities by designating support to security cooperation as an Army core enabling competency.²³ Barely a year old, the army devoted an entire manual, titled *Army Support to Security Cooperation*, to assist Army forces in executing TSC activities in support of a CCDR.²⁴ With an eye to the future role of movement and maneuver, *The U.S. Army Functional Concept for Movement and Maneuver 2016-2028* makes clear linkages to the RAF concept and the capabilities that the movement and maneuver WfF intends to provide to a CCDR. As a result, the future missions and associated tasks required of a BCT to perform decisive action nest closely with the current requirements of a RAF BCT to perform its prevent, shape and win roles.

What appears to be missing from doctrine is the increasing demand for reconnaissance operations to address the future operating environment of a RAF-

designated BCT and the guidance contained in the ACC (ACC). The specific requirement provided by the ACC is:

Future Army forces require the capability to fight for, collect, and exploit information in close contact with the enemy and civilian populations through continuous physical reconnaissance, persistent surveillance, and human intelligence, enabled by responsive process, exploitation, and dissemination capabilities to develop the contextual understanding to defeat enemy countermeasures, compensate for technological limitations, and adapt continuously to changing situations within the operational environment in support of unified action.²⁵

In order to meet the ACC-generated requirements, the Army should designate reconnaissance as a warfighting function rather than as a tactical enabling task.

Doctrine does not adequately address the critical role that reconnaissance plays in shaping tactical through strategic environments for movement and maneuver and other warfighting functions. Requirements for reconnaissance are further amplified by the RAF concept. The Army's Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP) 3-90 classifies reconnaissance as a tactical enabling task that primarily performs in support of both the intelligence WfF and the movement and maneuver WfF.²⁶ The purpose of reconnaissance is to provide information that builds situational awareness to increase the commander's situational understanding. This understanding provides a commander of a RAF unit a clearer visualization of the operating environment, which facilitates rapid and informed decisions to direct operations.²⁷

The information provided by reconnaissance to support maneuver is as critical as the fires provided by artillery units. Reconnaissance provides the information that enables a commander to understand where he can gain a decisive advantage and limit the enemy's ability to disrupt decisive maneuver. Establishing reconnaissance as a warfighting function would acknowledge the critical importance that these activities play

in supporting RAF operations in the anticipated future VUCA environment.

Furthermore, and as a warfighting function, reconnaissance would provide appropriate attention to the planning and execution of operations in support of prevent, shape and win.

Organization

The current RAF-designated BCT's organic reconnaissance forces are insufficient to meet the RAF concept's requirements on the movement and maneuver WfF for supporting the range of military operations. The nature of the future operating environment will drastically increase the necessity for information/intelligence collection and security operations to reduce the uncertainty of a new or rapidly-evolving situation. The nature of a regionally aligned force is that it must be prepared to be expeditionary and can expect to deploy to a foreign land. An unfamiliar environment increases the requirement for BCT commanders to have the organic capability to conduct reconnaissance to gather information about the new environment and conduct security operations to provide advanced warning of a threat to his formation. Higher-level commanders at division, corps or a joint task force (JTF) headquarters also require information to aid their understanding of the situation on the ground.

The organic reconnaissance squadron's ultimate role in any type of RAF-designated BCT is to aid movement and maneuver tasks through reconnaissance and security (R&S) operations.²⁸ During RAF shaping operations that are designed to gain access to and develop relationships with a partner country, reconnaissance forces can assist in setting favorable conditions. They are trained to gather information about aspects of the physical environment, infrastructure, people, and culture and could assist

theater planners to gauge capabilities and access limitations in support of future contingencies.²⁹

Even with the seven standard Army R&S missions, there is no standard reconnaissance squadron organization between the IBCT, SBCT and ABCT organizations. This incongruent approach continues to the platoon level, where there are different capabilities and limitations. The approved FY14 MTO&E, dated October 1, 2013, adds another maneuver battalion to BCTs with the exception of those BCTs currently stationed in Europe.³⁰ An additional maneuver battalion further exacerbates the imbalanced ratio of reconnaissance forces to maneuver forces in a BCT. As a result, this imbalanced ratio may require a BCT commander to divert maneuver forces to conduct reconnaissance or security missions in order to gain and maintain situational awareness or to protect a flank. Diverting maneuver battalions to R&S operations negates the purpose of returning the third maneuver battalion to a maneuver brigade formation.

During Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), the mission sets assigned to most BCTs required three or more battalions to serve as land owning commands. BCT commanders were obliged to employ their reconnaissance squadrons in a maneuver battalion role, which severely degraded their BCT's organic ability to answer priority information requirements (PIR). The addition of a third maneuver battalion allows BCT commanders to employ their organic reconnaissance squadron to conduct reconnaissance and security missions. In sum, the Army should not increase the number of maneuver battalions without a corresponding increase in reconnaissance forces.

Furthermore, the Army does not appear to employ a standard logic to how reconnaissance forces are structured to support each type of BCT. The ratio of mounted reconnaissance troop headquarters to infantry or armor company headquarters provides a quick look to highlight the differences between BCT types. The ratios of mounted recon troops to maneuver companies are: 1:6 in an IBCT, 1:3 in an SBCT, and 1:4 in an ABCT. Although the MTO&E for each reconnaissance squadron associated with its respective IBCT/ABCT/SBCT is significantly different, the seven core missions are the same.³¹

The Maneuver Center of Excellence (MCoE) at Fort Benning recognizes the capability gaps in the current structure of reconnaissance squadrons and is actively working to enhance capability through increased structure.³² The MCoE has also been developing concepts to address the future operating environment and guidance contained in the ACC. Its ongoing efforts will develop solutions to meet the joint and Army reconnaissance and security requirements as defined by the Army Operating Concept (AOC), the ACC,³³ and the Army Movement and Maneuver Concept (MMC).³⁴ Additional discussion in the reconnaissance and intelligence communities needs to occur to develop a concept that will better fulfill the requirement to enable maneuver forces and support the reconnaissance demands of the RAF concept.

The Army should institute a standard ratio of one mounted reconnaissance troop, with three platoons, to each maneuver battalion. This would allow BCT commanders to task organize reconnaissance capabilities to each maneuver unit as the mission requires. A single mounted reconnaissance troop should be capable of conducting R&S missions in support of the breadth of a maneuver battalion's doctrinal frontal coverage.

Additionally, each BCT should be organized with a two-platoon dismounted reconnaissance troop (DRT) to perform those specialized surveillance and covert reconnaissance tasks to answer a BCT commander's PIR.

In order to effectively address the reconnaissance force capability gaps, decision-makers must standardize the recon platoon's manning, equipment and training in order to meet the requirements placed on the movement and maneuver WfF by the RAF concept. In addition to differing reconnaissance troop quantities, each type of BCT has a significantly different reconnaissance platoon in terms of manning, equipping and associated training requirements.³⁵ Retaining multiple platoon configurations is not efficient for the training base, nor is it a cost-effective approach. Each of the three types of mounted recon platoon configurations has a dissimilar set of capabilities and limitations due to the equipment and manning. Incongruent capacity between RAF-designated BCTs presents a challenge to the joint force to understand the reconnaissance capabilities and limitations within each type of regionally aligned BCT.

A team of Joint Readiness Training Center observers/coaches/trainers, who are some of the Army's most qualified experts on reconnaissance and security operations, developed a number of recommendations to address the reconnaissance and security capability gaps.³⁶ Significantly, their proposed concept accounts for the increased information requirements generated by the RAF concept. Their principle recommendation supports the aforementioned proposal for the Army to standardize BCT reconnaissance squadrons with three mounted reconnaissance troops, each consisting of three mounted platoons. Additionally, they suggest that the Army increase reconnaissance platoon size and consider a standard platoon configuration that is

manned with 42 Soldiers and equipped with four Stryker vehicles, four light weight, wheeled reconnaissance vehicles, (such as the Medium Assault Vehicle-Light or Flyer Advanced Light Strike Vehicle) and two side-by-side ATVs.³⁷

The expert's recommendations are sound for a number of reasons. A standard platoon configuration would reduce institutional training costs and reduce local training costs associated when scouts join a different platoon configuration on permanent change of station (PCS). The increased manning level allows a platoon to be able to execute core tasks for long durations, while limiting the requirement for maneuver force augmentation. Another strength of this recommendation is that it provides a more flexible organization that is focused on covertly gathering information rather than fighting for it. Regardless of the Army's selection, future RAF-designated BCTs of any type must be equally capable of providing reconnaissance capability in support of the RAF concept.

Training

The current ARFORGEN process manages all Army units in a predictive cycle that synchronizes manning, equipping and training. Units will progress through reset, train/ready or available force pools in a 24-month cycle while personnel rotate on a 36-month tour.³⁸ For the most part, this current approach is adequate to train and manage readiness for RAF-designated maneuver units to meet the requirements promised by the RAF concept. However, the current ARFORGEN system does not provide a holistic methodology to mitigate the risk to the baseline readiness of the entire force. The high level training proficiency required of maneuver units by the RAF concept will require the Army to refine the ARFORGEN model to achieve a sustainable level of readiness and prevent creating a hollow force.³⁹

The RAF concept requires that regionally aligned forces achieve training readiness level one (T-1) proficiency on their core decisive action training mission essential task list (C-METL). These forces are then validated in a mandated culminating training event (CTE) at either home station or a combat training center (CTC).⁴⁰ The CDR may dictate additional training requirements, including specific regional training and potentially some level of language familiarization.⁴¹ Specific to the movement and maneuver warfighting function, the RAF concept places demands to achieve a high level of proficiency in less than a year and maintain it over the course of the year of RAF unit availability to the CDR

The range of missions of a RAF-designated BCT continues to grow. BCTs may be expected to conduct combat operations, perform strategic response force duties, and conduct security cooperation activities. A BCT might also be tasked to serve as a visible and capable formation that reassures our allies and deters an adversary in a location like South Korea. The Army may also be called upon to rapidly provide regionally aligned BCTs to a CDR in support of an emerging crisis. Regardless of the assigned mission, managing the readiness of each unit is important in order to provide the promised RAF capability to a CDR in a timely manner. As such, the Army has a responsibility to ensure that Army maneuver forces are ready.

The Army's training strategy should focus on meeting the CSA's vision for providing a ready, expeditionary land force that maintains the capability and capacity to perform the range of military operations in support of the joint force commander.⁴² However, as stated by the CSA, the strategy must also account for how to maintain training readiness to "ensure the right mix of operationally ready and responsive Total

Army forces and capabilities to rapidly meet emergent Global Combatant Command requirements while maintaining an operational and strategic landpower reserve.”⁴³

Training is only one component to measure the overall readiness to go to war. The challenges in maintaining a trained and ready RAF-oriented Army are further compounded by the current fiscal constraints on the Department of Defense. The Secretary of the Army and CSA described the impact caused by the lack of resources in their 2013 posture statement to congress:

With sequestration, the Army will not be able to fully train our Soldiers, whether through professional military education or collective unit training, in a way that enables them to operate successfully in a complex environment across the full range of military operations. The long-term readiness impacts of the resulting deficit in trained forces will jeopardize the Army’s ability to meet war plan requirements.⁴⁴

Given the CSA’s vision and the fiscally constrained future, the Army’s challenge is to determine how to meet existing requirements without creating a hollow force. The Army will not likely have the resources to maintain every BCT at a T-1 level of training on a 24-month cycle. Additionally, the Army cannot afford to mortgage the readiness of “operational and responsive Total Army forces”⁴⁵ and must make every effort to mitigate the risk to readiness driven by the reality of a fiscally constrained future.

The implied task then is to develop low-cost solutions to build and maintain readiness across the force at the highest level achievable with the given resources.

The Army should adopt a new approach to the ARFORGEN process that creates a higher base level of readiness across the Army through better manning and equipping strategies. Any potential solution must also consider how to mitigate the effects of sequestration on the readiness of the Army in general by specifically targeting the readiness of those units who are not given a specific mission. A planning factor that the

Army should consider is that units can maintain a higher level of training proficiency and create a higher level of readiness by continuously manning units near 100 percent of authorization, reducing personnel turbulence, and maintaining equipment at high levels of readiness. Hence, personnel stability can partially offset the damage caused by reduced budgets. Furthermore, raising unit readiness requires less training time and resources if the unit is already manned and equipped at the highest levels. Lessons learned over the past 11 years of the ARFORGEN process and common sense support the notion that if the people and equipment are not present, then the training is of little value. When building readiness, manning and equipping levels are just as critical as firing bullets.

The Army should increase personnel tours from three to four years in length for Soldiers assigned to corps and below formations that are part of the RAF concept. The increased time on station would permit personnel managers to reduce turbulence to a unit by rotating only six percent of the population per quarter from a BCT. Clearly there would be exceptions to the four-year rule, such as the need to accommodate 24-month BN/BDE command team rotations. Consideration should also be given to allow for talent management of those individuals identified for early departure to key broadening assignments. A four-year assignment cycle also provides cost savings by reducing the number of PCS moves. Additionally, this concept supports the fundamental RAF tenet for individuals to develop a better understanding of a specific region and potentially build language proficiency.

The former SECDEF, Leon Panetta, raised the notion of reversibility in the Defense Strategic Guidance. His guidance was to maintain a system that allows the

military industrial base and military in general to quickly grow capability and capacity to respond to unforeseen threats.⁴⁶ The Army must set conditions to meet the SECDEF's guidance for reversibility. The first step is to raise the readiness baseline across the Army, and a four year assignment process will help accomplish this.

The concept of overall unit readiness is a function of the sum of personnel, equipment, supply and training readiness. If the Army can resource personnel and equipment, and sustain equipment readiness for units in a reset or train/ready force pool, those units will require less time and resources to increase training readiness. A commander whose unit is manned and equipped at a high level and has little more than the precious resource of time will find innovative ways to achieve a higher level of training proficiency. Preserving a higher training base decreases the time required to achieve readiness level-one status.

There is an old adage that still applies today: "It takes three to make one." The phrase conveys the notion that in order to produce a single trained and ready BCT, two additional BCTs are required. One BCT is required to conduct the current mission, a second BCT to train to replace the first, and the third BCT is recovering and resetting from a mission. This third BCT plays a critical role in protecting the other two BCTs from support tasks and out-load requirements during a deployment.

The Army should increase the current 24-month ARFORGEN model to 36 months while modifying the existing force pool construct as an improved method to manage readiness (see figure 1). The aim of modifying the existing ARFORGEN process is to maintain a higher baseline level of readiness across the Army while acknowledging the importance of regional alignment.

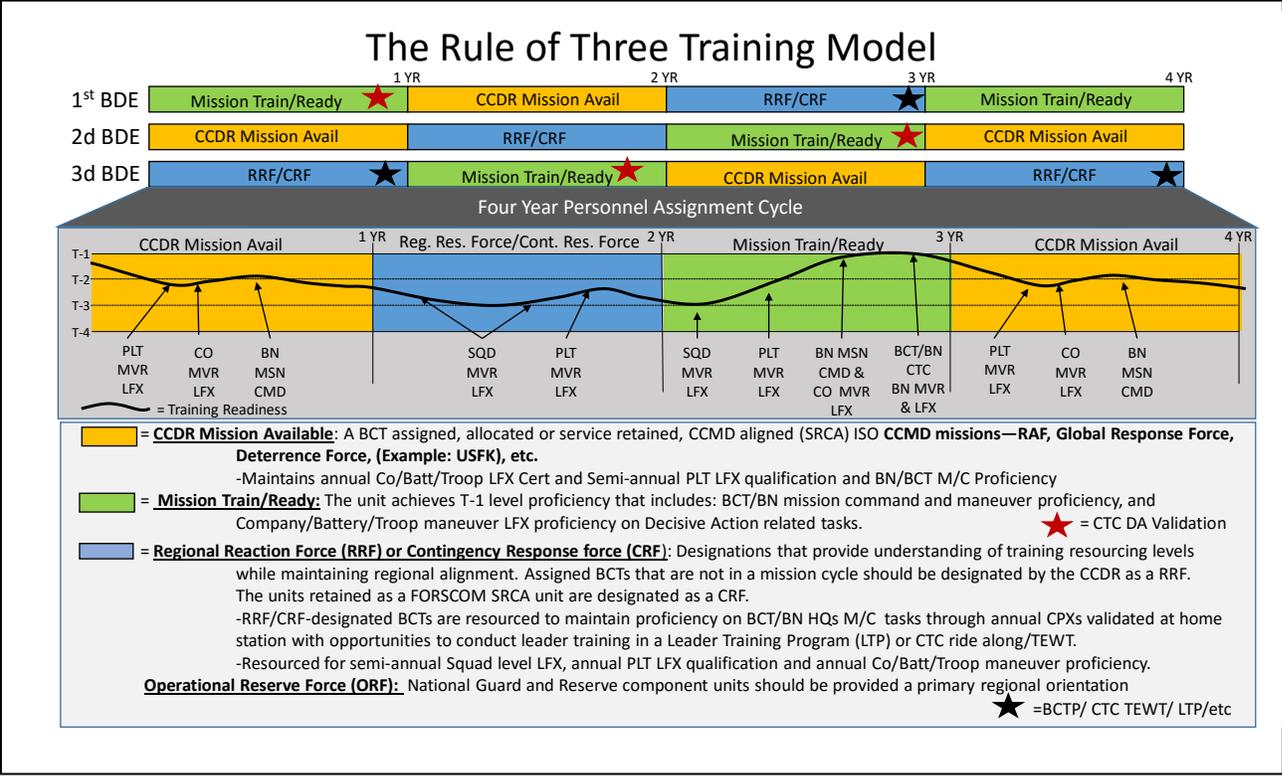


Figure 1.

The Army should rotationally designate BCTs that are not assigned a mission as contingency response forces (CRF). Likewise, combatant commands should designate select units as regional reserve forces (RRF). Designating units as a RRF/CRF provides a way for the Army and GCCs to manage readiness through a resourcing strategy that maintains a higher level of baseline readiness while maintaining a regional focus. Designated RRF/CRF units maintain a high enough level of proficiency so that when the unit is assigned a mission, it would conduct focused home station training to achieve T-1 proficiency in 30 days or less.

While serving as a RRF/CRF, a BCT would conduct reset, provide support to the installation, and be prepared to support deployment out-load operations. Additionally, the BCT in a RRF/CRF role allows other BCTs in the train/ready and mission availability pools to concentrate on their missions. A potential drawback to a 36-month model is

that command select list (CSL) commanders and command sergeants major might not command during a mission cycle or they might prepare the unit and change command/responsibility prior to mission execution.

The aforementioned paradigm accounts for how the missions are spread across all the BCTs aligned with a division headquarters and the FORSCOM RAF training guidance that accompanies each type of designation. The multiple-BCT focus of the model also accounts for the support requirements that may be expected of BCTs in support of a senior commander on a single Army post. This cyclical approach averts a tiered readiness system that has significant negative implications on the professionalism, readiness and morale of our Army and should be fiscally feasible in the current and expected resource constrained environment.

Materiel, Leadership and Education, and Personnel

The examination of the RAF concept did not produce any new requirements for material development for the movement and maneuver WfF that the MCoE is not already addressing. The MCoE has placed significant effort in developing concepts to address future capability requirements for maneuver and reconnaissance forces. However, the RAF concept places additional demands on the leadership and education for the movement and maneuver WfF such as regional orientation, cultural awareness and language requirements. These training requirements are adequately addressed in the FORSCOM training guidance and Army doctrine. The impact to personnel associated with the movement and maneuver WfF is broadly discussed in the organization and training portions of this paper's DOTMLPF analysis.

Facilities

The RAF concept creates implications for the movement aspect of the warfighting function with regard to the location of Army units and an installation's out-load capability. One of the expectations of RAF-designated units is to be rapidly capable of global employment in order to achieve positional advantage over a potential adversary by strategic movement. In order to meet rapid deployment requirements, the Department of Defense should retain and build the capacity of domestic and foreign installations that are in close proximity to aerial and sea ports of embarkation. In a fiscally-constrained environment, that may require base realignment and closure (BRAC) decisions, retaining optimal locations that enable strategic movement by air or sea.

Conclusion

The Army's Regionally Aligned Forces concept is a viable approach to provide trained and ready maneuver forces to combatant commanders (CCDRs) to operationalize the prevent, shape and win strategy. The concept creates a number of challenges for the movement and maneuver warfighting function in terms of doctrine, organization, training and readiness for BCTs. This paper identified existing capability gaps created by a shortage of a BCT's organic reconnaissance force structure and provided recommendations to address these shortfalls. The study also provided a better understanding of the risks and potential mitigation strategies involved in training and manning a BCT under current ARFORGEN policies. With additional refinement, brigade combat teams will have the capability and capacity to fully support the regionally aligned forces concept to provide modernized and ready, tailored land force

capabilities to meet the combatant commander's requirements across the range of military operations.

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