

Strategy Research Project

Retaining Active Duty Talent in the Army Reserve

by

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Abstract

The greatest asset of the United States Army is the American Soldier. They are the heart and soul of the most powerful military in the world. Every soldier devotes their time and energy, endures rigorous training, and prepares themselves to protect our nation. They are the fundamental building block of the Army and it cannot succeed without them. Since 9/11, the experience soldiers gained in the fight against terrorism is invaluable. Unfortunately, most soldiers by default end their military career after active duty service and the Army is losing this talent. Released soldiers have years of experience and training with no way to pass on this information. These soldiers have essential knowledge necessary to prepare future soldiers of the Total Army Force. The best way to access this talent is to promote service in the Reserve Component by adjusting policies and procedures to improve and encourage the flow of soldiers among the Active and Reserve components. This paper examines the importance of continued service in the Reserve Component, reviews the current recommendations for continuum of service, analyzes current policies and procedures, and recommends new ways to retain Active Duty talent in the Army Reserve.

Retaining Active Duty Talent in the Army Reserve

The Army Reserve is critically short mid-career soldiers and it does a poor job retaining prior service soldiers who could fulfil this need. In the 1980s and 1990s about 50% of the new personnel accessions into the Reserves were soldiers from active duty.¹ Today that number is about 20% for enlisted and 35% for officers.² Experienced, trained soldiers who can lead the future force are key to a successful Army. Many leaders recognize the importance of retaining the best talent. Current studies recommend structural changes to improve retention by simplifying transitions among the active and reserve components, but these recommendations may take years to implement. Over the past fifteen years, soldiers have learned essential skills that are invaluable for teaching the next generation war fighter. Is the Reserve Component doing all it can now to retain this talent? There are many soldiers who are not ready to commit to reserve service when they leave active duty, but most will decide within six months of departure. The longer they are separated, the less chance they will serve. This paper will explore existing recommendations and offer new suggestions to encourage and ease the transition of prior service soldiers into reserve service.

Army Vision

The Army Vision of the future sees a more complex world. To prevent, shape, win conflicts, and achieve national interests it must use the Total Force--Regular Army, Army National Guard, and Army Reserve. It must balance the proper distribution of resources and capabilities across each of these components. The key is having soldiers who are agile, innovative, and ready to accept whatever challenges face our nation. The training each soldier receives prepares them for this task. They are taught to be experts in their field, to be agile enough to rapidly identify complex problems and use innovative

thinking to solve them. They have learned a base set of war fighting skills that give them the confidence, competence, and critical-thinking skills to respond to unexpected and complex problems. These soldiers are taught to be creative and versatile to respond to many different types of future threats. In short, the Army must prepare for the future security environment with an agile, expert, innovative, interoperable, expeditionary, scalable, and balanced soldier that can meet the nation's demands. They are our strategic advantage in a complex world.³

The 25th Secretary of Defense, Ashton Carter, understands the importance of each soldier. In November 2015, Secretary Carter outlined his strategic initiative for building what he called the “Force of the Future.” This initiative is about harnessing the best talent America must offer and what the Department of Defense must do to keep its superiority in the 21st century. Carter believes that if the military does not bring in the best people, we will fall short of securing our nation. The all-volunteer force has always mastered change with excellence, but this “isn’t a birthright” and “It’s not guaranteed.” “Our force of the future has to be just as great, if not even better, than our outstanding force of today.” As the Secretary of Defense, Carter understands that his top priority is defending this country, and “as long as our military continues to harness the best talent America has to offer, we will always come out ahead. I’m confident of that.”⁴ Secretary Carter is not the only top defense leader who believes this way. Lieutenant General Charles D. Luckey, who took command of the United States Army Reserve Command and assumed duties as the 33rd Chief of Army Reserve on June 30, 2016, is also a proponent of recruiting and retaining the best Americans.

In his first address to his soldiers, Lieutenant General Luckey laid out his vision for the Army Reserve. He said we need to lead the Army Reserve into the future to be the most capable, the most ready, and the most powerful Army Reserve that America has ever seen. He also said that “America’s first priority is readiness” and “Our mission is to man, train, equip and be ready to deploy a wide array of combat ready forces, capable of conducting and/or supporting full-spectrum operations on short notice.”⁵ He understands that in order to execute the missions given to the Army Reserve, his soldiers need to be ready. Per Army Readiness Guidance, readiness provides the purpose, direction, and motivation for the United States Army to accomplish their mission while improving key aspects of overall strategic readiness in compliance with the National Military Strategy. Army Readiness is based on four pillars: manning, training, equipping, and leader development. Readiness is benchmarked against the Total Army Force and its ability to defeat, deny, or deter hybrid, near-peer threats and meet operational demand requirements.⁶ By retaining soldiers from Active Duty in the Army Reserve, we capitalize on the time and money spent to train them while using this resource to staff the Reserve force. This automatically fulfills two of the four pillars of Readiness by providing trained soldiers to man the Army Reserve.

The key to the United States Army winning its future conflicts hinges on each trained soldier. In a statement to Congress on April 7, 2016, the Acting Undersecretary of the Army, Honorable Patrick Murphy, and the Chief of Staff of the Army, General Mark Milley, underscored the importance of readiness.

The first component of readiness, manning, is about people--the core of our Army and keystone to innovation, versatility, and combat capabilities. Unlike other

Services that derive power from advanced platforms, the collective strength of the Army is people.”⁷ Even though “The Army’s greatest asset is its people,” readiness “takes time and is expensive.”⁸ Time is irreplaceable, and it is an investment of both the soldier and the United States Army. It can take an individual soldier years to develop readiness. By retaining as many soldiers in the Army Reserve as possible, the United States is maximizing its investment potential, and making smart use of its finite resource, money.

Army Reserve End Strength

The Army Reserve personnel strength is in trouble because it is falling critically short on its most important manning category of both mid-career Non-Commissioned Officers (NCO) and Commissioned Officers. Specifically, the NCOs are dangerously short Staff Sergeants and Sergeants First Class, and the officers are short Captains and Majors.⁹ These soldiers are paramount to the success of the Army Reserve and the nation. There must be a change to address this problem soon or the United States risks future failure. At first glance, this end strength problem may not be noticed.

The End Strength of the Army Reserve, which is meeting its objective, is not an indicator of the problem that exists due to its lack of trained and experienced mid-career soldiers. Much of the force capability rests with the NCOs and junior officers who mobilize and lead the unit to accomplish their mission. These leaders are not developed overnight. It takes time, training, and resources to build these soldiers. Over the past fifteen years, the Army engaged in two wars: Iraq and Afghanistan. Many brave soldiers dedicated their time and energy to protecting this nation and deployed, sometimes multiple deployments, to fight these wars. During this time they gained invaluable training and experience that is necessary to lead the force of the future. A 2014 RAND study showed the extent of valuable deployment experience the Army accumulated.

Since September 11, 2001, until 2012, the Army provided over 1.65 million cumulative deployed troop-years, more than all the other services combined. There was an enormous amount of relevant knowledge and skills gained during this time.¹⁰ This service has come not only at a cost to the soldier, through the dedication of their time, effort, and energy, but to the United States, through the cost of training and support.

Every year, the United States invests an extraordinary amount of money in each soldier to prepare them for service. The costs range from training and salaries to overseas tax benefits. The average cost to train an initial entry soldier is \$69 thousand.¹¹ The average cost to pay an Active Duty soldier is \$90-\$100 thousand per year, although some estimates are higher.¹² For an enlisted soldier serving four years, the United States will have invested close to \$500 thousand. The costs to train an officer with a four-year Reserve Officer Training Corps scholarship, or a degree from West Point, prior to joining Active Duty, can reach almost \$1 million based on higher pay and college tuition. There is also the added cost per soldier if they were deployed in support of an overseas contingency operation, with some estimates putting the cost at \$850 thousand per year.¹³ The bottom line is the United States Government invests a lot of money to train, prepare, and enable each soldier to fight. Using the invaluable experience they gained will have a huge impact on the success of future operations. If the Army Reserve can retain this resource it will go a long way to closing its gap on mid-level NCOs and officers.

Current Recommendations

In 2015, the President and Congress appointed eight Commissioners to investigate the best way forward for the Army in an initiative called the National Commission on the Future of the Army (NCFA). The purpose of the NCFA was to help

political and military leaders in deciding the right size and structure of the Army so that it is ready to meet its future challenges. The Commissioners met for the first time in April of that year and began their work with a goal to be unbiased, transparent, and inclusive. They fulfilled their obligation to the President and Congress of the United States when they reported their findings and recommendations on January 28, 2016. The overarching theme of the report is that the Total Army--Regular Army, Army National Guard, and Army Reserve--must work as one Army under the Total Force Policy to be successful. Many of the recommendations they made focused on integrating their efforts in the areas of recruiting, pay, and personnel.¹⁴

To the extent possible, the NCFR recommended changes to allow each component--Regular Army, Army National Guard, and Army Reserve--to share as many resources as possible. For instance, they noted that each component recruits and advertises in their own way. If they combined their efforts they would not only be more efficient, but they would stop competing with itself for the same pool of qualified individuals. This ties in with their recommendations to develop one Army based on their findings that soldiers continually face obstacles when transitioning among components. First, the Army must manage and provide forces under the Total Force approach (Recommendation #26). Next, all components could designate integrated positions whereby NCOs and officers from all components would fill these positions to foster an Army Total Force culture and expand knowledge about other components (Recommendation #27). Finally, develop selection and promotion policies that would incentivize and encourage soldiers to take assignments across components and within multicomponent units (Recommendation #28). The report finds that "A key aspect to

achieving integration of the components is providing officers and enlisted soldiers opportunities to serve in other components.” If these recommendations were implemented, it would be easy to see how recruiting and marketing efforts could share resources and reduce inefficiencies. However, to make these recommendations work the Army Personnel Management and pay system also needs to change.¹⁵

The Army personnel and pay systems are different for each component, and it’s a known problem. The Department of Defense has been working to solve this problem since the 1990s when they introduced a system called the Defense Integrated Military Human Resources System (DIMHRS).¹⁶ Unfortunately, according to the former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Michael Mullen, “This program has been a disaster,” and the decision was made in 2010 to terminate DIMHRS. However, this still doesn’t solve the problem that without a single, integrated personnel and pay system, the Army cannot fully implement the Total Force Policy. Soldiers who want to transition among components, commonly known as “continuum of service,” find it very difficult. The NCFR believes “a singular personnel management and pay system for the whole Army will promote and provide the greatest administrative step toward implementing the Total Force Policy.” They recommend using the Integrated Personnel and Pay System-Army (IPPS-A) to achieve this end.¹⁷ The NCFR is not the only one recommending IPPS-A. Army Deputy Chief of Staff, G-1, Lieutenant General James McConville, in his statement before the Senate Armed Services Committee on March 8, 2016 said to build a Total Army of Active, Reserve, and National Guard Forces, we need to be able to manage all talent across each component to ensure the best use of the force.¹⁸ He believes IPPS-A is the right tool for the job. “IPPS-A is a Human Resources Information

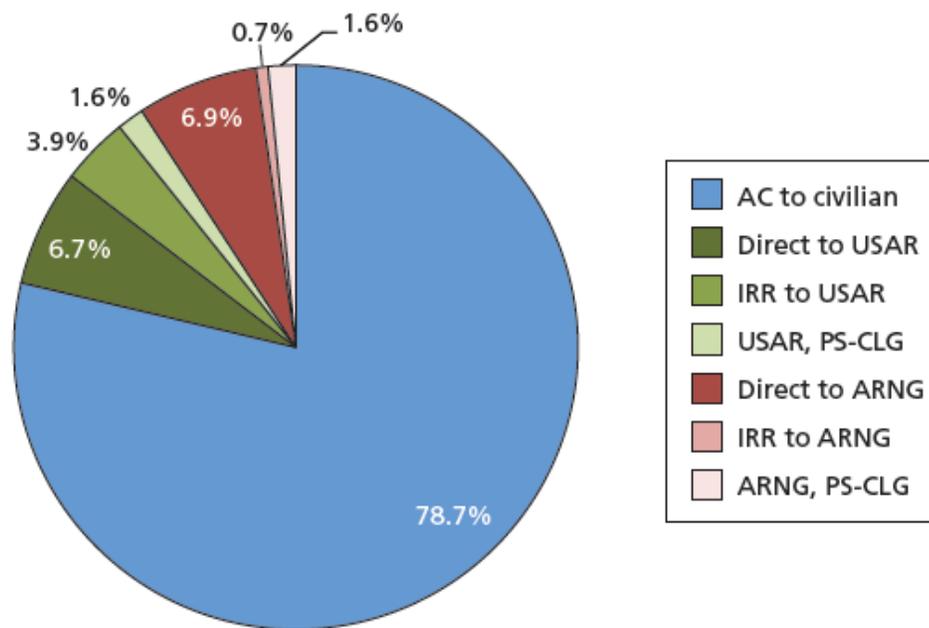
System (HRIS) that for the first time, will allow the Army to manage the Active Component (AC), Army Reserve Component (RC), and Army National Guard on one HRIS, providing visibility of the knowledge, skills, abilities and behaviors of the Total Force.”¹⁹ As the NCFA points out, they understand the hesitancy to implement IPPS-A given the bad experience with DIMHRS, but a new integrated personnel and pay system is the right thing to do.²⁰

Overall, the NCFA concludes that “Unity of Effort” is the best way forward for the United States Army. Wherever possible, the Army must manage as One Army. Today, there are many policies and procedures in effect that prohibit all components from working together as one team, but the NCFA believes it can be fixed. “What soldiers accomplish so well in the crucible of combat, the Commission challenges Army and political leaders to accomplish in managing these soldiers all the time: to take specific steps to achieve a truly Total Force with three distinct, interdependent, and essential components.”²¹

Reserve Component Accessions Study

In September 2016, the RAND Corporation published an extensive study on how to strengthen accessions from the AC into the RC. Their goal was to improve the process to transition AC soldiers into the RC by providing information for military leaders based on focus group interviews and personnel record reviews.²² In the 1980s and 1990s, about half of the new personnel accessions into the RC were Prior Service (PS) soldiers from the AC.²³ Recent data shows accessions into the Reserves has dropped, with only about 20% of PS enlisted personnel and 35% of PS officers joining the Reserves after their Regular Army (RA) commitment. These new accessions can be separated into three groups: Direct Affiliation--those who join within six months of

leaving the RA; Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) Affiliation--those who join after affiliating with the IRR; Prior Service Civilian Life Group (PS-CLG)--those who join after a break in service of more than six months after leaving the RA and more than eight years after joining the RA. Of the three groups of new accessions, Direct Affiliation is the way most soldiers join the Army Reserves. Figure 1 shows the pathways into Reserve Component for enlisted personnel.²⁴

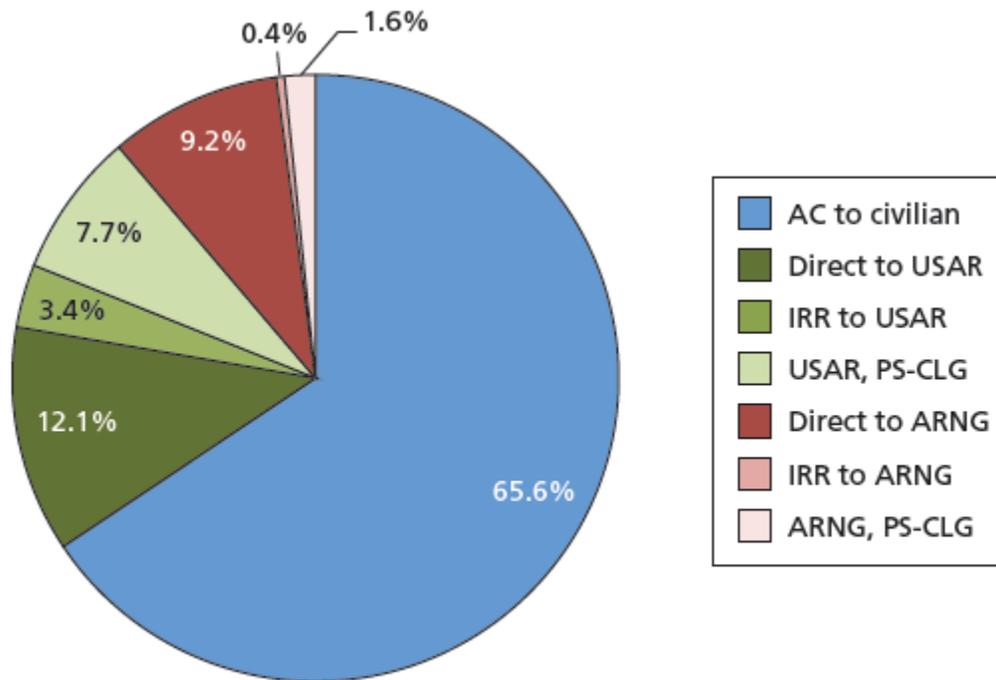


SOURCE: RAND Arroyo Center analysis based on Army personnel data.
 RAND RR1376-3.1

Figure 1. Pathways into the Reserve Component, Enlisted Personnel²⁵

An analysis of how former Active Duty enlisted personnel join the RC show that the total accessions were a little over 20%. Most of these soldiers joined the RC within six months of leaving the RA (Direct Affiliation). The least likely method to join the RC was after an extended time as a civilian (PS-CLG). Some soldiers joined the Army Reserve after service in the IRR, but very few joined the National Guard. Of the soldier accessions into the RC, most served three to six years and achieved the rank of

Specialist E-4 or Sergeant E-5. Typically, higher ranks are a smaller percentage because soldiers who achieve these ranks have served longer and will naturally stay in the RA until retirement. Officers chose to join the RC almost twice as much as enlisted soldiers. Figure 2 shows the pathways into Reserve Component for officer personnel.²⁶



SOURCE: RAND Arroyo Center analysis based on Army personnel data.
 RAND RR1376-4.1

Figure 2. Pathways into the Reserve Component, Officers²⁷

An analysis of how former RA officers join the RC show almost 35% accessions into the RC. Also, as with the enlisted soldiers, most accessions occur within six months of separation from the RA. Unlike the enlisted soldiers, officers were least likely to join the Army Reserve from the IRR, although their least likely path into the National Guard was the same as the enlisted, via IRR. The type of officers joining the RC is also like the enlisted soldier in that they also primarily leave the RA after three to six years. Most officers who leave the RA during this period achieve the rank of Captain (O-3). Although

this study was released in 2016, the data analyzed soldiers who left the RA between 2003-2010, and their accessions into the RC was studied using personnel data through 2013.²⁸ As the study notes, this was a unique time in our history based on the operational tempo of duties and deployments. The data can be extrapolated, but the tempo now is not the same.²⁹ Another part of the RAND study was to gather data by interviewing soldiers and recruiters.

The interviewee questions for PS soldiers focused on both the positive and negative aspects of joining the RC. First, almost universally, the soldiers who were interested said their decision to join the RC would only come after they settled into their new location, and only if there was a desirable opportunity in the area. They would not use RC job or unit location to find where they lived. This at once suggests that it is important to focus RC opportunities in locations where most soldiers live. These soldiers agreed that the benefits associated with the RC would have a big impact on their ultimate decision to join. They discussed what they considered important reasons why they would join the RC. The list includes tuition assistance or other educational benefits, health care, bonus pay, retirement benefits, job security, supplemental income, travel reimbursements, and the ability to defer deployment for two years. They also discussed things they worried about when considering whether they would join. This list includes jobs not available in their field of expertise, inflexible requirements, a threat to their civilian employment and/or requirements that would interfere with their civilian or family life, the perception that the RC is unprofessional when compared to the RA, and a few thought the RC mission might not be valuable.³⁰ Another group who is intimately involved getting former RA soldiers to join is the RC recruiters.

Recruiters have a unique perspective on accessions of PS soldiers into the RC. Their daily task is to complete the commitments of these soldiers in writing. They are the last line of defense in building the RC force. They have seen and heard it all, and part of their job is to figure out when some are not forthright with prior issues (health, legal, etc.). For most soldiers, they agree that bonus pay, educational benefits, health care, and retirement benefits are enticements, but they see most joining to supplement their income. They also said that applicants did not like the fact that they might need re-training, often training is not available, and the process to hire can be difficult and cumbersome. Overall they believe that the best time to recruit these soldiers is before or shortly after they leave Active Duty.³¹ The study concludes with recommendations to improve the flow of AC soldiers into the RC.

The RAND study examined a wide variety of factors that contributed to PS soldiers joining the RC. Whether enlisted or officer, the data showed that both groups were most likely to join within six months of separating from the AC, and both benefits and unit location were major considerations when making this decision. The main benefits were education, healthcare, and pay, which included both supplemental income and bonus pay. Interestingly, soldiers did not decide what unit to join before leaving the AC mostly because they did not know what was available in their hometown. The study summarized two main recommendations as “USAR [United States Army Reserves] recruiting might be well served to focus efforts particularly on those leaving the AC and to pursue policies that would create more job openings in the areas in which recent veterans wish to live.”³² Fortunately, the Army is using a program that focuses on

soldiers transitioning out of the AC, and with some modifications may be able to help capitalize on insights gained through the study.

The program the Army uses today to help soldiers transition from Active Duty to civilian life is the Soldier for Life--Transition Assistance Program (SFL-TAP). It began in 1990 when Congress passed a law directing the Secretary of Defense to develop a program specifically to assist members of the armed forces stationed overseas who are preparing for discharge or release from Active Duty (and their dependents) in readjusting to civilian life after involuntary separation.³³ In response, the Army created the Army Career and Alumni Program (ACAP) to assist soldiers transitioning to civilian life in a caring, organized, and professional manner.³⁴ Since then, the program has had many updates. In 2011, President Obama announced his commitment to employing American's Veterans. He directed the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs to develop proposals to maximize the career-readiness of all service members prior to separating from the military.³⁵ Their recommendations led to the passing and signing of the *Veterans Opportunity to Work (VOW) to Hire Heroes Act* by President Obama on November 21, 2011. The VOW changed how the Army prepared soldiers for civilian life, and to recognize this the Chief of Staff of the Army changed the name of the program from ACAP to SFL-TAP on June 20, 2014.³⁶

The updated SFL-TAP program includes a set of standard training outcomes captured in an initiative called the Career Readiness Standards. It is a list of activities that soldiers must complete before they transition out of the AC in order to be "career ready." These activities are mandatory and are available to soldiers up to 18 months before separation. They include training such as preparing a post-separation budget,

evaluation of military skills transferable to the civilian sector, research of jobs available, Veteran Benefit registration, and a Continuum of Military Service counseling.³⁷ These activities help soldiers transition to civilian life, and as the RAND study showed, this is the opportune time to encourage AC soldiers to consider RC service.

Recommendations

Consider updating Continuum of Military Service counseling to including retirement benefits. The law mandates this counseling to explain the advantages and procedures for affiliating with the Select Reserve.³⁸ If soldiers properly understood both pay and retirement benefits before leaving the AC, it may transform their thinking about continued RC service. Soldiers know RC pays is \$6000-\$8000 per year for a Specialist or Sergeant, but this is not very enticing considering what they made on active duty. However, when combined with retirement benefits, this amount could easily reach \$1,000,000 over their life. Most soldiers leaving the AC have three to six years of service and have achieved the rank of Specialist or Sergeant. They have accumulated a considerable amount of retirement points (one point for each Active Duty day served), and can apply it to a RC retirement after twenty years of service. If a soldier served five years on Active Duty, they will have accumulated over 1800 points. With another fifteen years of service in the RC and only the minimum service commitment, the soldier would have almost 3000 points at retirement. As an example, a retired Sergeant First Class would earn almost \$300,000 in retirement pay alone if he lived to eighty years old. A Sergeant Major with 4000 points and thirty years of service would make over \$500,000.³⁹ That is a considerable amount of income benefits lost if the soldier ended their military career after serving in the AC. If they leave the service before twenty years, they receive no retirement benefits. In contrast, the private sector must legally

vest employees after five years of service. As far back as 1970, the Gates Commission, among others, recognized this all-or-nothing system is unfair, but by law the Army must still use this old pension structure.⁴⁰ Soldiers need to understand there are more benefits than just RC pay and retirement pay. They also need to understand the medical benefits to make intelligent decisions about continued service.

Retirement pay alone may not reach \$1,000,000, but a combination of medical benefits from TRICARE Reserve Select and TRICARE For Life (TFL) can be significant and easily exceed that amount. The TRICARE Reserve Select is low-cost medical insurance available to all Reserve soldiers and their families regardless of prior medical history. The TFL is a Medicare supplement plan available to soldiers who retire after twenty years of service. Later in life, the chance of needing medical care increases significantly. Additional medical coverage--TRICARE For Life--can offer benefits for those who need it, and can save retirees \$100,000s who need healthcare. "Retirement pay is nice, but TFL is the best thing. Once you use it, you'll find out what a blessing it is."⁴¹ If soldiers leaving the AC understood the benefits they lose by not affiliating with the RC, many would reconsider. Understandably, most young soldiers worry about the immediate future, not the distant future.

Another way to encourage soldiers to continue their service in the RC is to offer more bonus money. The United States Government invests a considerable amount of time and money in each soldier. The investment in an enlisted soldier can be at least \$500,000, while an officer with paid college tuition can approach \$1 million. If you include the "cost of experience" when a soldier deploys, the amount can reach multiple millions of dollars. This investment is more than just money. The amount of time it takes

to train and build experience is invaluable. These soldiers have valuable skills needed for mid-level roles in the RC where they are short almost 14,000 Staff Sergeants and Sergeants First Class, and almost 5,000 Captains and Majors. By retaining the service of these AC soldiers, the RC is much closer to filling these deficiencies with experienced soldiers that save training dollars in the shortest amount of time. Currently, the RC offers a standard \$10,000 of bonus money to soldiers, with some higher demand jobs reaching \$15,000. Compared to the amount of money invested in each Soldier, this is at most two% of the total amount invested. The cost to train a new soldier alone is five to ten times more than the bonus, and these soldiers are inexperienced and unavailable while they are in training. An inexpensive way to accommodate the readiness needs of the RC now is to increase bonus money. Doubling or even tripling the current bonus offers is still a reasonable cost based on the talent retained by the Total Army Force. Many soldiers, however, are still not ready to commit to RC service when they leave the AC. The Army must implement more proactive steps to encourage a return to service later.

Many soldiers who leave active duty have reached a point in their life where they are ready for a change. They could re-enlist and continue their AC service, but they choose to leave. There are many reasons: family, friends, a desire to return home, or a new job. For some, they would stay in the Army if there were different options, but these options are not available, and they are just "tired of being told no."⁴² Whatever the reason, these soldiers are not prepared to commit to additional service. The Army must recognize this difficult transition period, and establish procedures to make RC service at

a later date as easy as possible. This may be the last personal interaction with these soldiers.

First, allow soldiers to keep their military identification cards until the end of their military service obligation. Soldiers can check their Army Knowledge Online email, pay, and gain access to military installations. The Common Access Card is an integral part of staying connected to the Army. It is way to make soldiers feel they are still part of the military and a way for the military to stay in contact with the soldier. All these benefits come with little or no extra cost.

Next, consider creating IRR slots in each Troop Program Units (TPU) and assign IRR soldiers to a unit in their hometown. These new slots would not count against unit readiness, but instead act as a place holder for IRR soldiers. This would have many benefits. First, it would give soldiers a personal contact in their area to meet and ask questions. Each unit has a personnel manager or unit administrators (UA) who could help manage this population. Today, due to budget constraints, there is very little active management of soldiers in the IRR, and these soldiers lose contact with someone who can help them.⁴³ Unit administrators are an experienced resource with the available skills to help these soldiers. Next, assigning IRR soldiers to a unit offers a list of potential, local soldiers on every Unit Manning Report that commanders could use to recruit for their unit. Commanders and recruiters do not always know what prior service soldiers are available in their area, and this would be a starting point. It could also save Army Reserve Careers Division money they spend to locate IRR soldiers.⁴⁴ Finally, this would give the Army a way to pay IRR soldiers to update their status, which leads to the next recommendation.

Pay IRR soldiers to update their contact information and stay in touch with a recruiter or UA in their area. Additionally, pay soldiers who volunteer to take part in an annual Army Physical Fitness Test or Soldier Readiness Processing medical exam with their locally assigned unit. This gives the Army another way to continually encourage service in the RC. Unit administrators could process pay like TPU soldiers according to their rank and time in service. This would allow soldiers the opportunity to settle into their civilian life wherever they choose to live and still have contact with a recruiter and UA who knows the RC opportunities in their area. Also, the pay would help soldiers with expenses while finding a civilian job, keep the Army fresh in their minds as an option, and show that the Army still cares about them and their future service. If ten soldiers each received a \$1000 annual pay, and only one out of the ten joined the RC because of this interaction, the cost would be the same as a \$10,000 bonus. It is a win-win for both the Army and the soldiers.

Conclusion

The success of the Army depends on its soldiers. Brave men and women from all walks of life volunteer to serve with a desire to be the best they can be. The Army must challenge and prepare them with realistic training taught by experienced soldiers. These experts have gained skills while training for and fighting two wars over the past fifteen years. The knowledge and wisdom they developed through this experience is invaluable. The Army Reserve needs this talent to lead their young soldiers and should commit to retain as many as possible.

Endnotes

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