

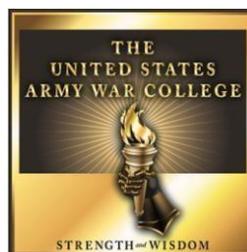
Strategy Research Project

Building Effective Training Readiness in the Reserves

by

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United States Army War College
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Abstract

Since 2001, the Army Reserve has deployed more than 310,000 Soldiers in support of the War on Terror. These deployments have changed the focus of the Army Reserve from a strategic reserve to an operational force. This shift, encapsulated in the Army Total Force Concept, necessitates a greater reliance on the reserve component to meet worldwide operational needs. The Army, as a Total Force, must be ready to mobilize and deploy on short timelines in an austere, decisive action environment against a near-peer competitor. The current training model does not allow RC units the frequency, consistency, and ultimately, the quality, to reach readiness levels commiserate with their AC counterparts. The Army must change the methods and frequency of training if it expects RC forces to be adequately trained to meet a compressed timeline.

Building Effective Training Readiness in the Reserves

No longer a strategic, supplemental component, the USAR has become a crucial and complementary force to the Army's overall deployable strength...

LTG (R) Jeffrey W. Talley¹

Due to operational tempo, the active duty military (AC) has come to rely more heavily on reserve component (RC) forces. Since 2001, the Army Reserve has deployed more than 310,000 Soldiers in support of the War on Terror.² These deployments have changed the focus of the Army Reserve from a strategic reserve to an operational force. This shift, encapsulated in the Army Total Force Concept, necessitates a greater reliance on the reserve component to meet worldwide operational needs.

The RC now accounts for a large amount of the Army's technical, maneuver support, and logistics functions.³ Maintaining these capabilities in the reserve as an operational capability saves money, reduces active Army deployment cycles and diversifies experience across the force.⁴ However, it also increases the strategic risk as the active duty force cannot operate without the reserves—they are more than a strategic reserve to augment the active force. Over the past 16 years this risk was mitigated through deliberate planning for the use of, and subsequent mobilization of, RC forces due to the relatively predictable pace of operations; however, the future might not allow for this planning. According to United States Army Reserve Command (USARC), many Army Reserve units are required to deploy within 30 days based on current contingency planning.⁵ The Army, as a Total Force, must be ready to mobilize and deploy on short timelines in an austere, decisive action environment against a near-peer competitor.

Despite the increased use of the reserves, the reserve component training model has not changed since formalized in 1916. The Army has changed the structure of the U.S. Army Reserve without changing the training of that structure. It is asking too much of reserve component leaders and First Army trainers to prepare reserve units for a near-peer threat in 12 weekends and during two weeks in the summer. The current training model does not allow RC units the frequency, consistency, and ultimately, the quality, to reach readiness levels commiserate with their AC counterparts. There is simply too much to do in such a short period of time. The Army must change the methods and frequency of training if it expects RC forces to be adequately trained to meet a compressed timeline.

The Army, in order to integrate the RC and reduce risk on the Total Force, must do three things to ensure the reserves are properly prepared for a mobilization: 1) ensure policies and funding support a flexible premobilization training model that provides reserve component forces the appropriate time and focus to accomplish effective readiness; 2) maximize the use of combined training events between units, to include formal and informal partnerships between reserve component and the active component; and 3) build a culture of readiness where leaders take the necessary steps to achieve the desired readiness levels. Doing these things will reduce the strategic risk of employing them as an operational force.

This paper will expound on these by reviewing the history and the development of the Army Reserve system.⁶ It will examine the impetus for the Army Total Force Concept and discuss the effects of the transition from the Army Forces Generation Model (ARFORGEN) to a “tiered-readiness” Sustained Readiness Model (SRM).

Finally, it will provide recommendations for building readiness to reduce the risk across the Total Force.

How Did We Get Here: A History of the Reserves

Various articles have questioned the wisdom to use the reserves operationally. Perpetual requirements and the fiscal realities enacted by Congress have forced that decision. This is not a new reality. Despite being considered a strategic reserve, reserve component forces have been used regularly as an operational force. According to Title 10 of U.S Code:

the purpose of each reserve component is to provide trained units and qualified persons available for active duty in the armed forces, in time of war or national emergency, and at such other times as the national security may require, to fill the needs of the Armed Forces whenever more units and persons are needed than are in the regular components.⁷

Congress, adhering to the responsibility given to it by the Constitution to raise and support armies, has historically used the reserves to rapidly increase the size of the army to minimize the overhead expense of maintaining a large standing Army. For most of the United States' history, a large standing Army was not required as most threats were regional and geography protected our borders. This changed near the turn of the 20th Century as industrialization expanded borders and the United States looked across the ocean for greater economic growth. America's global threats increased with the added requirement to protect shipping lanes and trade partners.⁸

Continued problems with raising and mobilizing trained volunteers drove Congress to formalize the federal system following the Spanish-American War. Although the reserve component—the Army Reserve and the National Guard—can trace its' lineage through the militias of the Revolutionary War, the Army Reserve was not officially instituted until 1908 when the Senate passed Bill 1424 to overcome a

shortage of doctors in the Regular Army.⁹ This development continued with subsequent modifications by the Army Appropriations Act of 1912, the National Defense Act of 1916, and the National Defense Act of 1920.¹⁰ The expedition into Mexico to capture Pancho Villa and the concerns about World War pushed Congress to make the 1916 National Defense Act extensive. In addition to increasing “Regular Army” (active duty) strength to 175,000 soldiers, it authorized the President to federalize the National Guard, funded 48 periods of drill and 15 days of annual training (for the National Guard), and established the Officer Reserve Corps, the Enlisted Reserve Corps, and the Reserve Officer Training Corps. This Act standardized requirements for and began to professionalize the volunteer force of citizen soldiers.¹¹

The interwar years saw minor changes in the construct of the reserves, however, the closure of World War II and the onset of the Cold War provided the energy for additional adjustments. Military planners considered the threat from Cold War enemies and drafted plans that required a large force to deter and potentially defend our allies in Europe. Despite numerous assessments advocating for a large standing force, decision-makers were reluctant to maintain and fund such a large force structure. The World War II Army of over 8 million soldiers would consist of just 591,000 in 1950.¹² This provided added incentive to ensure the emergency reserve was trained and prepared.

This was noteworthy as the Korean War followed soon thereafter and the reserve component was used extensively. Congress continued to work to professionalize the Army Reserves, standardizing training and drill pay for Army Reservists in 1948, creating parity with the National Guard, and passing the Armed Forces Reserve Act of 1952 to change the Organized Reserve to the United States Army Reserve. The Armed

Forces Reserve Act restructured the Army Reserve into the Ready Reserves, Standby Reserves, and the Retired Reserves.¹³ Reservists also saw a change to their promotion systems and significant increases in their funding.¹⁴

The Kennedy administration's decision to enter Vietnam and President Johnson's subsequent reluctance to commit to a large mobilization of reserves eventually led to another massive restructuring of the Army. The operational and strategic loss in Vietnam forced the Army to rebalance capabilities between the active and reserve components.

Although often thought of as a result of Vietnam, movement toward Total Force Policy occurred in the early stages of the war. The initial groundwork was laid prior to Vietnam when the Secretary of Defense, Robert McNamara, started a reorganization directed by President Kennedy that led to a greater alignment to make the reserves "more responsive to the needs of the Army in the event of rapid mobilization" by bringing them in line with requirements.¹⁵ This study led to a greater integration of the reserve components by the program that started as the Army Total Force Concept and later was enacted as Army Total Force Policy. Although McNamara's larger goal of combining the Army Reserve and the National Guard failed, he was able to reorganize most combat units to the National Guard while maintaining the bulk of combat support and combat service support units in the Reserves. The dissolution of the draft in 1973 and the initiation of the all-volunteer force increased the necessity of a total force.

The subsequent administration continued this initiative by implementing the Total Force Concept that became the Total Force Policy in 1973. This policy is often referred to as the Abrams Doctrine as it is believed that General Creighton Abrams, Army Chief

of Staff, following his posting as commander of forces in Korea, pushed its enactment as a future hedge against politicians sending the military into conflict without fully mobilizing.¹⁶ Regardless of the policy maker's original intent, the Army now had a greater reliance on the reserve component due to a larger percentage of Combat Support and Combat Support functions located in the Army Reserve.

The country again called on the reserve component during the Gulf War, including more than 80,000 National Guardsmen and 35,000 Army reservists; however, a portion of those did not deploy or participate in combat due to questions about their readiness.¹⁷ This friction further resulted in changes, including the establishment of a Congressionally-mandated Headquarters for the Army Reserves (United States Army Reserve Command) and further restructuring of the reserve component.¹⁸ This restructuring came about due to the recommendations of the "Offsite Group",¹⁹ allocating 367,000 positions in the Guard and 208,000 in the Reserve along with a realignment of functions that the Army stated would "more clearly concentrate combat support and combat service support functions in the Reserve and combat functions in the Guard".²⁰

In 2012, Secretary of the Army John McHugh implemented Army Directive 2012-08, Army Total Force Policy, directing the Army to integrate:

the Army's active component (AC) and reserve component (RC) as a "Total Force". DOD policies require the military departments to organize, man, train and equip their active and reserve components as an integrated operational force to provide predictable, recurring and sustainable and capabilities.²¹

Additionally, the policy adds:

As appropriate, the Army will integrate AC and RC forces and capabilities at the tactical level... This will include some predeployment collective training of tactical-level organizations, including for those organizations

that will routinely deploy as multicomponent forces (for example, sustainment brigades and other multifunctional support brigades).²²

Essentially, this directive provided guidance to the service to integrate Army systems to establish a total force that can train, mobilize, and fight together seamlessly.

Army Total Force

Current Army Chief of Staff, General Mark Milley, defines readiness as an “Army [that] is a manned, trained, equipped, and well-led force that can conduct Joint missions to deter and defeat a wide range of state and non-state actors”.²³ The Army measures readiness across each component the same, treating the active component and the reserve component the same when preparing for war. This is the right step, however, the conditions for building that readiness are significantly different in the active and reserve components.

Operational vs. Strategic Reserve

The Army previously used the Army Forces Generation model, or ARFORGEN, to source units during the Global War on Terror in order to prepare units for Iraq and Afghanistan. The steady, predictable nature of the deployments enabled the distinct cycles under ARFORGEN. This model maintained the necessary volume of ready units while also promoting the “reset” of individuals and equipment. It was characterized by three distinct cycles or phases: 1. a train/ready cycle where units received additional personnel and equipment while training to achieve proficiency through the battalion level; 2. an available cycle where units were available to deploy; and 3. the reset phase, where units were “reset”, conducting maintenance on their equipment, sending soldiers to school, and conducting turnover of their personnel in preparation for the next specified future requirement. This process worked on a three-year cycle for active duty

units and a five-year cycle for the reserves.²⁴ While ARFORGEN worked well to promote a deliberate process to prepare, deploy, and reset, it required the prioritization of manning, equipping, and funding for the units that were preparing to deploy at the expense of those who were not in the queue to deploy.

The withdrawal in Iraq and the adjusted requirements in Afghanistan have refocused the force on emerging threats. The increasing threats posed by an expanding China, expeditionary Russia, and nuclear-armed North Korea require an added emphasis on the collective technical capabilities of warfighting in a transregional, multi-domain, and multifunctional environment.²⁵ The Army requires units that are ready to meet a near-peer threat in addition to being trained just-in-time to support counterinsurgency against violent extremists. Decisive action requires a greater emphasis on the technical skills of the functions of the unit, repetitive unit collective training and comprehensive capability.

Sustained Readiness Model for the Reserve Component

The Sustainment Readiness Model does not have the distinct periods or phases like the Army Forces Generation Model but rather is focused on the maintaining acceptable readiness in prioritized units by optimizing resources for those units most likely to deploy. Whereas ARFORGEN was focused on a deployment rotation, the SRM is focused on maximizing capabilities over time for unknown requirements.²⁶ Although there are no distinct cycles, both the National Guard and the Army Reserve still operate on a five-year readiness cycle for known requirements.²⁷

United States Army Reserve Command reviewed their ability to provide the ready forces necessary to support the total Army in the event of a crisis requiring the mobilization of the reserves. LTG Luckey, Chief of the Army Reserve and Commanding

General of USARC, briefed the Senate Arms Subcommittee in April 2017 that he required up to 30,000 reservists trained and ready to deploy within 90 days, with many of these required within 30 days.²⁸ USARC calls this collection of units Ready Force X.²⁹ Figure 1 shows the extent to which these forces are required for the Total Army that must be prepared to deploy.



Figure 1. Army Reserve Ready Force X requirements³⁰

According to Figure 1, there are 181 distinct units within the Army Reserve that must mobilize and deploy within 30 days, accounting for a large amount of the Total Army's capability. Some of these units account for the only capability in the Army. Training shortfalls in these units will not only delay their mobilization and subsequent deployment but could have ramifications for subsequent unit deployments across the entire Army. Aligning with the SRM, these units need to be trained at T2 or better, requiring significant resources, primarily money and time.

The Army measures readiness utilizing four components: manning, training, equipment on hand, and equipment readiness. Although this paper's focus is on the training component, it should be noted that the components are interrelated. Manning

levels and dispersion of units, equipment shortages, and aging equipment all have effects on the readiness levels of the reserve component. Proper manning levels that include the right quantity, authorized ranks, and Military Occupational Specialties (MOS) have proven difficult to sustain. Reserve units are often geographically separated from their headquarters and sister units, and many leaders have to travel significant distances for training. Additionally, reserve forces have limited equipment stocks requiring detailed prioritization and management, further limiting training opportunities, to include the proper maintenance and care of the equipment. Each of these challenges makes it difficult for the reserve component to build and sustain a good training regimen and reach the required T2 level.

To measure the training readiness, a unit would conduct an Objective Task Level evaluation (Objective T, for short). The previous measure for evaluating training was subjective, giving commander's the freedom to assess their readiness relative to their Mission Essential Task List (METL). Commander's would assess each of their METL tasks as either Trained (T), Proficient (P), or Untrained (U), and then assess the total number of days required to train these tasks. Objective T clearly defines these measurements based on strict guidelines "to facilitate accurate and uniform readiness evaluations"³¹ and "enable senior leaders to make risk-formed resourcing and force allocation decisions".³² Previously, one unit's interpretation of a "Trained" task might have been assessed differently by an evaluator during an external evaluation. While these evaluations still have some level of subjectivity, Army leaders can now use these standardized METLs to compare the readiness of like units with objective criteria, regardless of component, active and reserve.

A Math Problem

First Army, as the active duty proponent to support reserve training, and reserve component leaders were already attempting to minimize the number of post-mobilization days required for the reserve component prior to deployment. Much of this emphasis was motivated due to the law enacted that limits the total mobilization time to less than 365 days. The more time that a reserve unit spends training prior to mobilization, the less time they can be used operationally overseas. The dynamic, however, is different with “Ready Force X”, as these units must minimize this post-mobilization time due to the requirement to deploy on short timelines as part of a contingency plan to deal with an imminent threat, or as LTG Luckey pointed out, “to anticipate a contingency demand different than a known demand”.³³ Future opponents will not be inclined to allow for a similar buildup to the 1990-1991 buildup for Desert Storm.

Likewise, the use of the reserves as an operational part of the Total Force will not allow ample time to train after mobilization. Time is limited for the reserves to train throughout the year, with only 39 federally mandated days and a limited budget to increase that amount. General Milley, in a speech to the National Guard Association of the United States, stated:

We must also be mindful that readiness takes time. Time to train, multiple iterations of exercises, and constant repetition at individual and collective level... And since 1915, America's National Guard has trained annually for 39 days. I want to challenge that. I'm not sure that's right. It might be 60. It might be 90. I don't know. I don't know what the answer is. But I don't know if 39 is right.³⁴

LTG Kadavy, the Chief of the National Guard took notice but acknowledged there is a potential funding issue: “I don't think there's any law that prevents us (from going for more); there is some policy that prevents too much time spent using training dollars”.³⁵

The current 39-day premobilization model dates back to 1916 when the Militia Act of 1903 (also known as the Dick Act or the “Efficiency in the Militia Act of 1903”) was amended. This act formalized training for reserve component forces, standardizing training from 24 to 48 training periods and adjusting the annual training days to 15. This equates to 24 full training days throughout the year and a two-week annual training period to make up the 39-day total.³⁶

In addition to the limited number of days to train, there are too many tasks for the number of days to train. Despite General Milley’s standing order is that ‘readiness is the number one priority...and there is no other number one’.³⁷ , the Army staff examined the standard requirements that are imposed on the force and determined there are far more requirements than there are available days to complete them (see Figure 2). Active duty units are estimated to have 220 days of time available, accounting for weekends and holidays, leave periods, taskings and exercises. Reserve component units are assumed to have the full 39 days available to complete training. Even if this were fact, any unit would have trouble completing a training cycle in 39 days, much less mastering the training they are conducting. Even if a reserve unit were given a full five-year cycle to complete training, based on the 39-day model, this would only allow for 195 total days of training, nearly a month shorter than the theoretical number of days active forces have in a year. If 220 days is difficult for an active duty unit, then 39 days is certainly difficult for a reserve unit. In addition, reserve component units often do not have the

convenience of access to virtual and constructive platforms due to their geographical separation from these training resources. This adds additional friction on the unit.

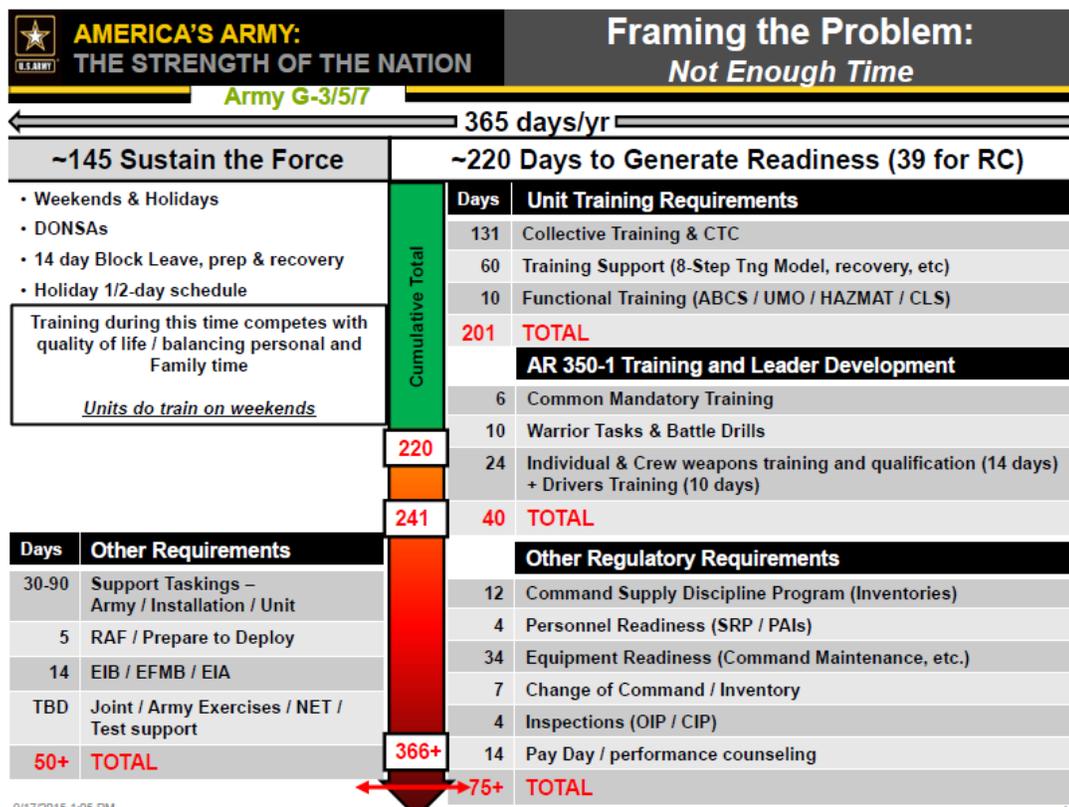


Figure 2. “Framing the Problem” The # of training requirements vs. available days³⁸

The structure of the training days exacerbates the problem. Most reserve component training is conducted one weekend every month and during a separate 15-day period that is conducted annually. The weekend training, also known as a Unit Training Assembly, or UTA, typically consists of two eight-hour days. Units sometimes combine these to gain efficiencies but it is unreasonable to expect these weekend training days as capable of being sufficient enough to generate readiness above the individual and small collective levels.

How do reserve component units have the time to plan and properly resource Mission Essential Task List (METL) training much less the time to execute it to standard while also allowing sufficient time for retraining? Soldiers and leaders must plan and prepare for training, conduct inspections, do maintenance, and prepare equipment. The 8-Step Training Model can be compressed but it should not be eliminated; active duty units often struggle with taking the time to execute to the degree required to execute a successful training event. Oftentimes, Unit Training Assemblies are occupied by the legal and regulatory required training requirements included in Figure 2. The Army is trying to eliminate or reduce the effects of many of the requirements by rewriting regulations and eliminating items that do not build training readiness, while also changing reporting requirements for those mandatory items, such as annual requirements changing to a two-year cycle for reserve units.³⁹ This will help with the challenge but not eliminate it.

As the Army Chief of Staff queried in his speech, what does right look like? United States Army Reserve Command and the National Guard Bureau have started budgeting for specific units, generally units slated to deploy in the latter years of their five-year readiness cycle, to receive additional training days. For the National Guard, this increase results in 60 days for units in the third year and 51 days in the fourth.⁴⁰ The Army Reserve has also authorized additional days for units and its leaders.

USARC and NGB may not have this flexibility in the future. Although Congress has approved the 2018 NDAA which included a \$700 billion defense budget, future years may not be so robust for military spending.⁴¹ Additionally, the Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) funds, long a bastion for the necessary increases in

readiness to deploy our forces, will not be part of the Army's funding stream forever.⁴² Policy and funding need to accompany these adjustments or they will be short-lived.

Recommendations

Change Policy and Funding to Support Reserve Commander Flexibility

Although the Army has tried to standardize training as much as possible, units are not the same across the Army. Giving commanders the flexibility to adjust the training model would increase opportunities and allow for better training. This is especially true of reserve component leaders that are part of Ready Force X. The limiting factor is not imagination, it is policy: current law only allows for the 48 periods of inactive duty training and 14 days of compulsory active duty service annually not to exceed 30 days.⁴³ Individuals can voluntarily agree but they cannot be forced to go beyond the 14 days. This puts soldiers, leaders, and by extension, units preparing for a contingency, in a difficult dilemma that is not easily solved.

As previous authors have suggested, providing for additional days or changing the structure of the days would enable better training opportunities. For example, one author suggested increasing the number of training days (up to 60) dependent upon the type of unit.⁴⁴ Another suggestion was for days to be restructured into 12 training periods in order to better maximize the time.⁴⁵ These approaches could be combined since both have merit. Either or both would provide the commander the flexibility to plan and develop a training plan based on the unit's training readiness (discussed in the third recommendation). However, neither accounts for the policy and funding limitations.

Increasing the number of statutory training days could have very real consequences on the reserves. Changing the policy to increase the number of compulsory days could frustrate soldiers, families, and employers, leading to problems

with morale and potentially, affect retention. Many soldiers choose the reserves because it offers an opportunity to serve close to home with a reasonable time commitment. Reserve component soldiers would spend additional days throughout the year away from home, missing work, or absent from classes. The added time commitment could cause soldiers and leaders severe penalties at home and at work, resulting in strained marriages and loss of wages. It is important for leaders to communicate the requirements early and often to all stakeholders—soldiers and their families, civilian employers, and political leadership—in order to mitigate this risk. There are many examples on the internet of senior leaders in both the National Guard and Army Reserves executing a campaign plan to message this to the public.

Combined Training and Partnerships

Another way to increase training readiness is to improve the quality of the training by increasing the partnerships with reserve units across the Army. Partnerships allow for shared experience and higher-level collective training. Additionally, it allows for greater training opportunities than what First Army can provide internally. In order to do this, there has to be increased visibility of opportunities and greater flexibility to integrate training.

First Army partners with the reserve component as directed by Congress in the 1992 National Defense Authorization Act. However, with only 3,299 Title XI active duty authorizations supporting both the National Guard and the Army Reserve, First Army is challenged to provide dedicated support across the components on a consistent basis. First Army has recently shifted prioritization to the Army Reserve following many years of focus on the National Guard. Consequently, First Army's organization, consisting of six Combined Arms Training Brigades and only three Multi-Functional Training

Brigades, is better aligned with the Maneuver and Combat Arms-centric National Guards vice the Combat Support-heavy Army Reserve. This misalignment adds to the complexity but does not make things impossible as they have an additional role that provides value.⁴⁶

First Army is a coordinating agent for the Total Force Partnership Program (TFPP). The TFPP is Forces Command (FORSCOM) initiative to operationalize the Army's Total Force Policy. This program aligns reserve component units with active duty counterparts "to promote leader development, share training opportunities, develop staff functionality, and share lessons learned".⁴⁷ The Associated Unit Pilot (AUP) takes this a step further by fully integrating active and reserve units across all the three components. The three-year pilot aligns specific units to plan, train, and possibly deploy together if required.

These formal training partnerships between the active and reserves are important for building readiness. However, opportunities could also be developed to enable better training among reserve component units. It is not uncommon to observe multiple reserve units in the field that could, if better synchronized, be training together to conduct collective planning and integration tasks to increase readiness.⁴⁸ This would require USARC, the National Guard Bureau, and First Army to maintain better situational awareness on long-range training calendars and resources to synchronize collective training across three components. It would be difficult, but not impossible to maintain this level of visibility. Similarly, training units at all levels and in each component should search for training events that maximize readiness. Ultimately, it is

the responsibility of the training unit and its higher headquarters to accomplish these readiness requirements.

Building a Culture of Readiness

Building and maintaining readiness in the reserve component is challenging. The reserve component has to contend with limited training opportunities, shortened planning timelines, dispersed units and equipment, along with soldiers and leaders that may have to travel several hundred miles to participate in training.⁴⁹ The motivation is there, however, both the active and reserve components have outsourced a great deal of training over the past decade while focused on Counterinsurgency, Counter Improvised Explosive Training, Cultural Training and other events. This has strained the culture of the Army: leaders have forgotten how to plan and execute training across the force. Often, commanders have ceded responsibility for unit readiness to outside agencies. Commanders set the tone for the organization and its leaders.

The next fight will be more technical than the last fight. Commanders must be fully engaged in the process to plan, develop, and lead training. According to Army Field Manual 7-0, Train to Win in a Complex World, the commander must communicate the vision, enforce the standard, and limit distractions.⁵⁰ In addition, the commander must have a dialogue with his higher headquarters to synchronize training:

These recurring dialogues help ensure both commanders agree with the direction and scope of unit training. The dialogues also enable the higher commander to approve the training and to ensure the necessary resources are coordinated and available when training occurs...Commanders can adjust training plans at these decision points, if necessary, and verify that units have critical resources when and where they are needed to train.⁵¹

In the reserve component, these dialogues often take place at Yearly Training Briefs and result in a “contract” on the training plan. Commanders shoulder the burden

of responsibility for reaching the level of readiness required of the unit, achieved through tough, realistic training that is validated by the higher headquarters in conjunction with First Army. They must also empower their subordinate leaders to proactively identify shortfalls and search out and take advantage of opportunities to improve individual and collective readiness. Reserve unit commanders do not have the convenience of time to wait on mobilization orders and post-mobilization training to determine and rectify training shortfalls.

Reserve component leaders' assessments of their unit's METL proficiency (or directed mission task proficiency) are key to this working. This assessment should inform the development of training objectives and a training plan that reflects the commander's training strategy. First Army trainers regularly observed training, despite being thoroughly planned and properly resourced, that did not support METL-related collective readiness. Despite the best intentions, commanders often failed to properly assess, plan, resource, and execute efficiently in a time- and resource-constrained environment.⁵² Active duty units have the same problem; however, the active component has the time and resources to compensate for the inefficiencies. A reserve component commander has a more flexibility to assess and adjust training with longer blocks (opposed to more shorter time blocks) of training time. Additionally, this flexibility would better support reserve leaders in the planning and synchronization of geographically-dispersed unit training plans.

Commanders must be realistic and honest with deficiencies. The Army profession is challenged with the myriad of day-to-day tasks as presented above. This friction creates dilemmas that challenge even the best units to report clearly. It is not

realistic to expect reserve units to be at the same composite readiness as an active duty unit when they have trained 25% of the time with limited manpower and equipment. Covering up the deficiencies or exaggerating readiness is not productive and risks putting the unit in an embarrassing, or worse, dangerous situation. There should be an open dialogue about what can be achieved in the time available. Commanders can then make prioritized decisions in order to reduce the risk. But this is something that must be practiced and enforced so that leaders are comfortable with owning the process and the risk of the decision.

Conclusion

The reserve component has been used extensively in the Global War on Terror. While this has increased their readiness and provided valuable experience, the next threat may be a near-peer competitor that will require the United States to fight a conventional Army. This will again will require extensive use of the reserves since they account for a majority of the Army's technical, maneuver support, and logistics units, many of which are required to be ready and deployed prior to the active duty. Having a trained and ready reserve force is a strategic requirement.

Expecting that extensive mobilization time will not be available, it is imperative that reserve forces have the appropriate training to prepare, requiring both a quantitative and qualitative review of methods. Everyone has a role to play. Policymakers should consider changing century-old restrictions on reserve training to allow for flexibility. The Army should assist reserve commanders by identifying partnered opportunities that increase collective readiness while striving to minimize requirements that detract from readiness. Finally, reserve leaders need to get back to

the basics, changing the culture to one where training management is executed relentlessly. Doing these things will reduce the risk of failure for the Total Force.

Endnotes

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² Jeffrey W. Talley, *The 2016 Posture of the United States Army Reserve A Global Operational Reserve Force*, Posture Statement presented to the 114th Congress, 2nd Session (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Army Reserve, March 22, 2016), 3, http://www.usar.army.mil/Portals/98/Documents/resources_docs/2016ArmyReservePostureStatement.pdf (accessed October 30, 2017).

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⁴ Ibid.

⁵ United States Army Reserve, "Ready Force X at a Glance," Linked from the *U.S. Army Reserve Homepage*, <http://www.usar.army.mil/Portals/98/Images/ReadyForceX/WhatisRFX-graphic.jpg?ver=2017-10-24-102038-407> (accessed January 24, 2018).

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⁹ Richard Crossland and James Currie, *Twice the Citizen, 23: A History of the U.S. Army Reserve 1908-1995* (Washington, DC: Office of the Chief, Army Reserve, 1984); Office of Army Reserve History, *Army Reserve: A Concise History*, 29.

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¹⁴ Crossland and Currie, *Twice the Citizen*, 116-120.

¹⁵ Crossland and Currie, *Twice the Citizen*, 157.

¹⁶ Conrad Crane and Gain Gentile, "Understanding the Abrams Doctrine: Myth Versus Reality," December 9, 2015, linked from the *War On The Rocks Home Page*, <https://warontherocks.com/2015/12/understanding-the-abrams-doctrine-myth-versus-reality/>, (accessed 2 December 2017). This article offers that this was a myth and little evidence to substantiate this claim. Additionally, as presented, the initiative to reorganize the reserves was started prior to General Abrams stint as the Chief of Staff.

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¹⁸ Office of Army Reserve History, *Army Reserve: A Concise History*, 12.

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²¹ John M. McHugh, "Army Directive 2012-08 (Army Total Force Policy)," (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Defense), 1.

²² *Ibid.*, 2.

²³ Mark Milley, Army Chief of Staff, *2017 Posture Statement of the United States Army*, Posture Statement presented to the 114th Congress, 2nd Session (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Army, February 24, 2016), linked from the *United States Army Homepage* <https://www.army.mil/article/163561> (accessed December 2017).

²⁴ Andrew Feickert, "The Army's Sustainable Readiness Model," March 31, 2017, linked from the *EveryCRSReport.com Home Page*, <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/IN10679.pdf> (accessed November 27, 2017).

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⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² The author heard this feedback regularly from First Army senior leaders during time as a staff officer. First Army focused on training management as a primary task with reserve component commanders and staffs.

