

Regionally Aligned Forces: The Way Forward

by

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Regionally Aligned Forces: The Way Forward

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Abstract

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The U.S. Army has established its Regionally Aligned Forces (RAF) policy as a way to provide the Combatant Commanders (CCDRs) with tailored, globally responsive, regionally engaged, and consistently available forces. In order to more fully realize the potential of RAF and maximize the utility of Army forces to the CCDRs, the Army must address four issues. First, the Army must conduct an effective information campaign to communicate the value of RAF to internal and external audiences. Second, the Army must establish long-term RAF unit alignment with the Combatant Commands (CCMDs) and reduce RAF unit rotation. Third, the Army should assign active component CONUS-based Army divisions to the Geographic Combatant Commands (GCCs) instead of brigade combat teams (BCTs). Fourth, the Army must clarify RAF funding responsibilities. These changes will increase the value of the RAF policy and Army forces to the Nation.

Regionally Aligned Forces: The Way Forward

When we went into Iraq in 2003, we did everything we wanted to. We very quickly removed the regime. We gained control of the population. We had no idea or clue about the societal devastation that had gone on inside of Iraq and what would push back on us. We didn't even think about it until we got in there. So we can't allow that to happen again.

—General Raymond T. Odierno
Chief of Staff, U.S. Army¹

In 2012, the U.S. Army established its Regionally Aligned Forces (RAF) policy as a way to meet a number of organizational goals including providing the Combatant Commanders (CCDRs) with tailored, globally responsive, regionally engaged, and consistently available Army forces. The Army also designed RAF to support Chief of Staff of the Army (CSA) Raymond T. Odierno's vision of Prevent, Shape, and Win as the Army's three primary and interconnected roles.² RAF supports the Army's responsibility to provide forces to the CCDRs for sustained engagement with international partners. RAF also provides a way to reduce risk and expenditure of resources in the early phases of conflict by providing proactively engaged forces to prevent and shape conflicts prior to the commencement of major combat operations.³ If deterrence fails, then Army forces provide the CCDRs with the ability to win decisively.

The purpose of this paper is to provide four recommendations on how to improve the Army's RAF policy. First, the Army must develop and implement an effective information campaign to communicate the value of RAF to internal and external audiences. Second, the Army must establish more enduring long-term RAF alignment with Army Service Component Commands (ASCCs) and Combatant Commands (CCMDs) by reducing RAF unit rotation. Third, the Army should institute a policy of assigning active component CONUS-based Army divisions to the Geographic

Combatant Commands (GCCs) instead of brigade combat teams (BCTs). Fourth, the Army must clarify RAF funding responsibilities. These changes will maximize the value of Army forces and the RAF policy to the United States in an era of uncertain threats and fiscal constraints.

In 2012, the Army published the Headquarters Department of the Army (HQDA) Execution Order (EXORD) Regionally Aligned Forces (RAF) to provide guidance to the Army for the implementation of RAF.⁴ The Army's intent for the RAF policy was to align Army forces with Combatant Commands to provide the CCDRs with "scalable, tailorable capabilities to enable him to shape the environment."⁵ CSA Odierno states in his 2012 *Marching Orders* that, "It is imperative that we be responsive to Combatant Commanders as part of the Joint Force."⁶ He goes on to present his vision of the Army's three vital roles of preventing conflict, shaping the environment, and winning decisively: Prevent, Shape, and Win.⁷ The Army created the RAF policy to achieve CSA Odierno's vision of Prevent, Shape, and Win by ensuring a global presence of Army forces to prevent conflict, provide Army forces to CCDRs to shape the environment, and increase the capacity of Army forces to win decisively as part of the Joint Force.⁸

The Army based the RAF policy on guidance from a number of national security documents including the 2010 National Security Strategy (NSS). The 2010 NSS states that, "Engagement is the active participation of the United States in relationships beyond our borders. It is, quite simply, the opposite of a self-imposed isolation that denies us the ability to shape outcomes."⁹ The 2010 NSS continues, "Our military will continue strengthening its capacity to partner with foreign counterparts, train and assist security forces, and pursue military-to-military ties with a broad range of governments."¹⁰

RAF enhances the Army's ability to meet these national security imperatives as part of the joint force. RAF aligns all components of the total Army force including Active, Reserve, and National Guard forces. RAF includes forces from the Active and Reserve components that are assigned and allocated to the CCMDs. It also includes those forces that are oriented on a specific region, but retained for employment by the Army. This category of forces is referred to as service retained, combatant command aligned (SRCA).¹¹

The 2012 Defense Strategic Guidance, *Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense*, provides clear direction for the Army's RAF policy. The document identifies ten primary missions for U.S. military forces, one of which is: Provide a Stabilizing Presence. It is described in the following way: "U.S. forces will conduct a sustainable pace of presence operations abroad, including rotational deployments and bilateral and multilateral training exercises."¹² The 2012 Defense Strategic Guidance continues, "These activities reinforce deterrence, help to build the capacity and competence of U.S., allied, and partner forces for internal and external defense, and increase U.S. influence."¹³ The Army's RAF concept is directly linked to this mission. RAF provides the CCDRs with forces that are responsive to their mission requirements and that are tailored to their specific region through cultural, regional expertise, and language (CREL) training.¹⁴

Developing an Effective RAF Information Campaign

Although the Army published the RAF EXORD in 2012, there still exists significant confusion throughout the Army and the defense community about exactly what RAF is. There are also a number of counter-arguments to RAF that have emerged since that time. In May 2014, a senior U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM) officer in

Kuwait addressed a number of points about RAF policy which are causing confusion across the defense community: “Will every Army unit end up being regionally aligned, or only some? Is this just about building partner capacity, or is this supposed to be about something deeper?”¹⁵ The officer concluded that as long as the Army does not effectively define RAF, leaders will interpret the intent of the policy to be “doing some things in conjunction with host-nation militaries.”¹⁶ A former Pentagon official also expressed his view that RAF is only a somewhat more useful way to improve partner capacity with a new name, or “another giant Army nothing-burger.”¹⁷

In order to address these persistent themes, the Army must develop and implement an effective RAF information campaign to communicate the value of RAF to internal and external audiences and clarify the policy’s purpose and scope. In 2013-14, the Army conducted extensive outreach and messaging about RAF to organizations throughout the U.S. Government (USG) and Department of Defense (DoD). However, during that period various Army leaders expressed different visions of RAF’s scope and purpose that contributed to confusion among internal and external audiences.

For example, in April 2014 Secretary of the Army John McHugh and CSA Odierno offered an expansive vision of RAF in joint testimony to the Senate Armed Services Committee. They wrote that RAF forces are, “tailorable and scalable, prepared to respond rapidly to any global contingency mission.”¹⁸ However, a U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM) official presented a decidedly narrower and more preventive view of RAF in Africa in February 2014 when he stated that, “By helping Africans help themselves, it means that we don’t have to get involved ourselves. If Africans are solving African problems, then the U.S. government doesn’t have to use the U.S. Army

to solve African problems.”¹⁹ These two visions of RAF illustrate one source of the confusion that exists among leaders across the USG and DoD about the policy. RAF often seems to be ‘all things to all people.’ An effective Army RAF information campaign will reduce this confusion and more effectively define RAF’s purpose and scope.

Another important aspect of the proposed Army RAF information campaign will be its utility in addressing the counter-arguments that have emerged since the Army unveiled RAF in 2012. One of the earliest counter-arguments to RAF may be called the “Break Glass in Case of War” argument. In the Autumn 2013 issue of the U.S. Army War College Quarterly *Parameters*, Brigadier General Kimberly Field, Colonel (United Kingdom) James Learmont, and Lieutenant Colonel Jason Charland described RAF as a policy to support the Army vision of a “Globally Responsive and Regionally Engaged Force” and essential to establishing the Army’s ability to Prevent, Shape, and Win in conflicts around the world.²⁰ In the following issue, Richard H. Sinnreich responded to the previous article and warned that RAF would dilute Army combat effectiveness by reducing the Army’s focus on core war-fighting skills by, “committing soldiers and junior leaders in penny-packets to repeated overseas deployments.”²¹

The underlying assumption of Sinnreich’s argument is that RAF will reduce Army combat effectiveness by diffusing the precious resources that Army leaders need to prepare their units for combat. This assumption begs the question: what is the Army for? Leaders who agree with Sinnreich’s argument might answer that the core function of the Army is to deploy and fight at the high end of the spectrum of conflict and win in major combat operations. A corollary to this view is that when not engaged in major combat operations, Army forces should be training for combat and any distraction from

that focus reduces Army effectiveness. The counterpoint to this “Break Glass in Case of War” argument is embedded in the Army’s vision of RAF as a mechanism to “Prevent” and “Shape” conflicts as well as “Win” in major combat operations.

RAF forces conduct active and sustained engagement with regional allies in order to build relationships with partnered forces, develop interoperability, and gain first-hand situational understanding of a region prior to a conflict. RAF is based on two assumptions. The first assumption is that these improved skills and capabilities will reduce the time and resources necessary to provide Army forces with decisive understanding of their environment in combat. The second assumption is that the benefits of spending limited resources to enhance a unit’s cultural and regional expertise are worth the risks of generating Army forces with potentially degraded major combat skills. Field, Learmont, and Charland defend this position in their article when they write, “Meeting combatant commanders’ specific day-to-day needs potentially requires a lower level of collective training than do major combat operations...”²²

Recalling the Army’s experience during the 2003 invasion of Iraq, CSA Odierno stated, “We went in there with a complete misunderstanding, regionally and inside Iraq of what was going on. I don’t ever want that to happen again.”²³ RAF provides the Army with a key mechanism to prevent this lack of situational understanding by Army forces in future conflicts. This counterpoint to the “Break Glass in Case of War” argument against RAF should be a central part of the Army’s RAF information campaign.

Related to the “Break Glass in Case of War” counter-argument to RAF is the “Relationships Don’t Matter” counterargument. This argument is based on a set of

assumptions about security cooperation held by some leaders within the defense community. This view is that security cooperation and partnering with foreign militaries does not decidedly advance U.S. national security. In 2013, well known defense analyst and security consultant Peter J. Munson provided an example of this perspective. He wrote, “Capacity building efforts are an exercise in futility as evinced by numerous cases in which decades of SC [security cooperation] have yielded no perceptible change in the capabilities of partner militaries.”²⁴

Proponents of the “Relationships Don’t Matter” argument view security cooperation activities as costly and of limited value. Often they claim that overseas exercises with foreign militaries waste precious resources and that they should be reduced or eliminated. Adherents to the “Relationships Don’t Matter” point of view often propose that essential security cooperation activities should be performed by Special Operations Forces (SOF) in order to free conventional Army forces to focus on training for major combat operations.²⁵

In order to build support for RAF, it is important for the Army to address the “Relationships Don’t Matter” argument as part of its RAF information campaign. Although it may appear self-evident to Army leaders that building strong relationships with partnered military forces is advantageous, continuing pressure on the U.S. defense budget makes the “Relationships Don’t Matter” argument attractive to leaders in the defense community. The burden of proof is on Army leaders to demonstrate that relationships do matter. One way that Army leaders can do this is by presenting evidence from academic research into the cost effectiveness of security cooperation and building partner capacity.

Although there are few historical studies on this topic, there is research that RAF proponents can point to in order to support their position. A 2004 study by Professor Malcolm Chalmers for the Centre for International Cooperation and Security found that security cooperation is, or would have been, cost effective in six recent international conflicts. The author cited evidence that, “conflict prevention is (or would have been) a cost effective investment for the international community in all the case studies chosen,” and that every dollar spent on conflict prevention by the international community generates a savings of four dollars.²⁶ This research demonstrates that effort and resources spent by the Army on building international partnerships with foreign militaries prior to a conflict reduces the overall cost of that conflict. The Army should make these research findings part of its RAF information campaign to counter the “Relationships Don’t Matter” argument.

Establishing Enduring RAF Unit Alignment

The second step that the Army must take in order to improve the utility of RAF forces is to establish more enduring long-term RAF alignment with ASCCs and CCMDs by reducing RAF unit rotation. Current Army policy is for corps and division headquarters to habitually align with CCMDs and for brigades to rotate among the CCMDs based on their Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN) lifecycle phase. This habitual alignment of corps and division headquarters and rotational alignment of brigades significantly reduces the return on investment in RAF made by CCMDs and ASCCs.

CCMDs and ASCCs invest a significant amount of time and effort in coordinating with and training their aligned RAF units. They also spend time and effort building relationships and interoperability with their RAF units. As the Army rotates RAF aligned

units, the CCMDs and ASCCs lose the effects of their valuable investment and must start over when they receive a newly aligned RAF unit.²⁷

RAF is based on the belief that building enduring relationships and partnerships is critical to the success of Army forces in future conflicts. It is likely that continued reduction in the DOD budget will continue pressure on CCMDs and ASCCs to reduce the size of their staffs. Unless RAF policy is changed to support habitual relationships, this will compound the pressure on the staffs as they go through a continuous process of introducing newly assigned RAF units to their theaters and building new relationships.²⁸

In Fiscal Year 2013, the Army established enduring alignments between corps headquarters and CCMDs. I Corps was assigned to U.S. Pacific Command (USPACOM), III Corps was aligned with USCENTCOM, and the XVIII Airborne Corps was service retained by the Army for the Global Response Force (GRF).²⁹ In addition, the Army habitually aligned division headquarters with the CCMDs. Examples include the 1st Infantry Division at Fort Riley, Kansas aligned with USAFRICOM and the 1st Armored Division at Fort Bliss, Texas aligned with USCENTCOM. However, the Army declined to habitually align brigades to the CCMDs in order to retain flexibility to respond to emerging mission requirements. Fields, Learmont, and Charland described the decision in this way: “While it is desirable to maintain alignment at brigade combat team level, the realities of defense missions make this aspirational rather than practicable.”³⁰

This rotational brigade model may enable the Army to gain efficiency and flexibility in sourcing units to the CCMDs, however the resulting turbulence associated

with constantly building and breaking relationships violates the spirit and intent of the RAF vision. Recent examples of RAF in the USAFRICOM area of responsibility illustrates the challenges associated with the rotational alignment model. In Fiscal Year 2013, the Army aligned the 2nd “Dagger” Brigade, 1st Infantry Division with USAFRICOM. From March 2013 to June 2014, 2/1 Dagger Brigade conducted three joint exercises and trained over 12,000 persons from 29 partnered nations. In addition, Dagger Brigade forces stationed in Djibouti deployed to support the U.S. Embassy in Juba, South Sudan.³¹

Early in 2/1 Dagger Brigade’s alignment with USAFRICOM, the brigade was authorized to conduct direct liaison (DIRLAUTH) with the U.S. Army Africa Command (USARAF) headquarters. USARAF planners travelled to Fort Riley, Kansas and met with brigade leaders to brief them on mission requirements and prepare them for the operating environment. In addition, 2/1 Dagger Brigade also sent liaison officers to USARAF headquarters at Vicenza, Italy.³²

These RAF planning and coordination functions could have more appropriately been performed at the division level, rather than requiring a brigade staff to coordinate these actions directly with the ASCC staff. By establishing enduring RAF unit alignment, these types of staff functions would more appropriately be coordinated between the division and ASCC staffs. This would enable brigades to focus on RAF mission execution.

In June 2014, the 4th “Dragon” Brigade, 1st Infantry Division assumed the USAFRICOM RAF brigade mission from 2/1 Dagger Brigade. Since both the 2/1 Dagger Brigade and 4/1 Dragon Brigade are subordinate units of the 1st Infantry Division at Fort

Riley, Kansas, the mission transition between these two units was not nearly as challenging as a transition between units from separate divisions. However, the decision to align 4/1 Dragon Brigade with USAFRICOM for this mission was made at Army Forces Command (FORSCOM) level, in accordance with the FORSCOM Mission Alignment Order (MAO), not by the 1st Infantry Division. Over 1,100 4/1 Dragon Brigade soldiers deployed to 18 different countries and trained over 2,500 persons during the 8-month alignment. 4/1 Dragon Brigade also conducted three multinational joint exercises and over 50 separate missions.³³ 4/1 Dragon Brigade completed their USAFRICOM RAF mission in January 2015.

In January 2015, the 4th “Highlander” Brigade, 1st Armored Division at Fort Bliss, Texas assumed the rotational alignment to USAFRICOM from 4/1 Dragon Brigade at Fort Riley, Kansas. The 4/1 Highlander Brigade is scheduled to perform missions in Africa in 2015 similar to those conducted by 2/1 Dagger Brigade in 2013-14 and by 4/1 Dragon Brigade in 2014. Planned 4/1 Highlander Brigade missions include providing a task force to serve in Djibouti for security in the Horn of Africa region, participating in two joint exercises, and conducting small unit training for multiple African nations.³⁴

While this 2015 alignment of the 4/1 Highlander Brigade to USAFRICOM provides a sourcing solution for the mission requirement, it is counter to the intent of the RAF policy. The 2013-14 alignment of 2/1 Dagger Brigade and 4/1 Dragon Brigade with USAFRICOM for this mission resulted in the development of institutional memory, coordination systems, and shared lessons learned between the USARAF headquarters, the USAFRICOM-aligned 1st Infantry Division headquarters, and these two Fort Riley, Kansas based brigades.³⁵ The Army’s decision to rotate the mission of the USAFRICOM

aligned brigade to the Fort Bliss, Texas based 4/1 Highlander Brigade introduced unnecessary turbulence and friction into the process. As the 1st Armored Division headquarters at Fort Bliss, Texas is regionally aligned with USCENTCOM, the USARAF headquarters must now transition its DIRLAUTH relationship for this mission from a brigade with a USAFRICOM aligned parent headquarters to one with a USCENTCOM aligned parent headquarters.

Feedback from multiple ASCC staffs is that they desire a long-term habitual alignment with RAF units. This long-term alignment provides the ASCCs and CCMDs with the greatest possible return on their investment in CCMD-specific training, enduring relationships, interoperability, and cultural expertise.³⁶ The Army should meet this demand signal from the ASCCs and CCMDs by changing the current policy of rotating regionally aligned brigades among the ASCCs and CCMDs. The Army should establish habitual regional alignment between the ASCCs and CCMDs and the division and brigade echelons in order to meet the intent of the RAF policy.

In the 2013-15 USAFRICOM RAF example, rather than aligning the 4/1 Highlander Brigade with USAFRICOM in January 2015, FORSCOM should have assigned the mission to another brigade within the USAFRICOM aligned 1st Infantry Division. That would have facilitated more effective mission coordination and synchronization by maintaining the 1st Infantry Division headquarters as the organic headquarters of the aligned brigade, rather than requiring the USCENTCOM aligned 1st Armored Division headquarters to coordinate with USARAF and simultaneously maintain its alignment with USCENTCOM and U.S. Army Central (USARCENT). This policy change will provide ASCCs and CCMDs with regionally aligned units that

possess deep cultural and regional understanding and provide an effective return on the time and resources that the ASCCs and CCMDs invest in training and coordinating with their RAF units.

Assigning Divisions to the Geographic Combatant Commands

The third step that the Army should take to increase the utility of RAF forces is to assign active component CONUS-based Army divisions to the GCCs instead of BCTs. The demand by GCCs for diverse and significant Army forces continues to increase, as evidenced by the requirements specified in the Fiscal Year (FY) 14-19 Program Objective Memorandum (POM).³⁷ Assigning or allocating BCTs to the GCCs limits the options that GCCs and ASCCs have for employing the full range of Army capabilities to meet their mission requirements. Assigning active component Army divisions to the GCCs would significantly expand the capabilities and enablers that would be available to the CCDR by making available the full complement of Army division-assigned assets and units. This would also enable division commanders and their staffs to identify the most appropriate units within their division to fulfill CCDR RAF requirements, manage and rotate requirements internally, and maintain unity of command by linking the GCC and ASCC to their assigned division headquarters and subordinate brigade combat team or enablers.³⁸

Title 10 United States Code (USC) Sections 161, 162, and 167 establish guidance for assigning military forces. The Secretaries of the Military Departments assign forces to the CCMDs to conduct missions. The Secretary of Defense (SECDEF) directs those assignments, including specifying which CCMD receives the assigned forces. The SECDEF may also transfer forces between CCMDs through the allocation

process. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) apportions forces to the CCDRs for planning purposes based on SECDEF guidance. The Global Force Management (GFM) process provides the SECDEF with detailed insight into the global availability of U.S. military forces for assignment, allocation, and apportionment. Forces which are not assigned to the CCMDs are withheld by the Secretaries of the Military Departments and are usually referred to as “service retained.”³⁹

CCDRs exercise command authority (COCOM) over their assigned forces and generally delegate operational control (OPCON) of assigned Army forces to their ASCC. The Secretary of the Army (SA) maintains administrative control (ADCON) of Army units that are OPCON from CCMDs to ASCCs. ADCON is defined as exercising authority over Army organizations for administration, support, personnel management, logistics, training, readiness, and discipline. The SA may also direct a shared ADCON relationship of units between ASCCs and Army Commands (ACOMs) or Direct Reporting Units (DRUs) to more effectively support Army forces.⁴⁰ The ACOMs include U.S Army Forces Command (FORSCOM), U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), and U.S. Army Materiel Command (AMC).

An example of these command authorities is found in the relationship between USPACOM, U.S. Army Pacific (USARPAC), and the 25th Infantry Division, all with headquarters located in Hawaii. USPACOM is a CCMD which delegates OPCON of the 25th Infantry Division to its ASCC, USARPAC. USARPAC maintains OPCON of the 25th Infantry Division and its organic units which include a headquarters battalion, two infantry brigades, an aviation brigade, and a division artillery brigade. As brigades assigned to the 25th Infantry Division rotate through the ARFORGEN process, they

complete a FORSCOM-run Combat Training Center (CTC) rotation to achieve the highest Army training readiness rating – T1. FORSCOM manages the ARFORGEN process for the Army, which results in T1 rated brigades for Army sourcing to meet the requirements of the CCDRs.⁴¹

An example of this process is the May 2014 deployment of the 2nd “Warrior” Brigade, 25th Infantry Division from Hawaii to Fort Irwin, California to conduct its CTC rotation to achieve T1 certification. This CTC rotation was National Training Center (NTC) Decisive Action Rotation 14-07.⁴² As the soldiers of 2/25 Warrior Brigade deployed from Hawaii to California for their NTC rotation, FORSCOM assumed OPCON of the unit from USARPAC. Following the completion of its training and redeployment back to Hawaii, the 2/25 Warrior Brigade returned OPCON from FORSCOM to USARPAC for employment in the USPACOM area of operations. In 2015, USARPAC and the 25th Infantry Division will employ the 2/25 Warrior Brigade for Exercise Cobra Gold in Thailand, Exercise Foal Eagle in South Korea, and Exercise Balikatan in the Philippines.⁴³

This is an example of effective RAF policy in action. USPACOM, USARPAC, the 25th Infantry Division, and 2/25 Warrior Brigade maintain consistent, long term alignment focused on the USPACOM area of operation during training. Following completion of its required CTC rotation, the 2/25 Warrior Brigade then continues its focus of operational employment in the USPACOM area of operation. This enduring relationship provides excellent return on investment for USPACOM, USARPAC, and the 25th Infantry Division by fielding a brigade for employment that has long-term focus and regional expertise in an enduring GCC area of operation.

The 2014-15 example of the 25th Infantry Division and 2/25 Warrior Brigade's enduring focus on the USPACOM area of operation contrasts with the experience of the 1st Armored Division and its 4/1 Highlander Brigade based at Fort Bliss, Texas. These units must split their focus between the USCENTCOM and USAFRICOM areas of operation during the same time period. In its FY13/14 MAO, FORSCOM directed the Headquarters, 1st Armored Division to align with USCENTCOM.⁴⁴ The division deployed units to Jordan to conduct joint exercise Eager Lion in June 2013 and to support the USCENTCOM (Forward) – Jordan (CF-J) headquarters in Amman, Jordan.⁴⁵ 1st Armored Division soldiers remained deployed to Jordan throughout 2014.

Simultaneously, 4/1 Highlander Brigade leaders and soldiers from Fort Bliss began preparing to deploy to Africa in 2015 in accordance with the FORSCOM MAO directing their unit alignment with USAFRICOM. This dual focus with the 1st Armored Division headquarters aligned with USCENTCOM and the 4/1 Highlander Brigade aligned with USAFRICOM is an example of less than optimal RAF policy. While this dual alignment of units from the same command may provide a sourcing solution to meet GCC requirements, it violates the intent of the Army's RAF policy of providing forces to the CCDRs with long term regional focus and deep cultural understanding.

The solution to this challenge is for the Army to assign CONUS-based divisions to the GCCs rather than BCTs. The mechanism to accomplish this would be through the SA's authority to direct shared ADCON of CONUS-based Army divisions between the ASCCs and FORSCOM. In this proposal, the Army would not assign a CONUS-based division to USPACOM because that GCC currently has the 25th Infantry Division and its subordinate brigades and enablers assigned. However, the Army would assign

CONUS-based divisions to the remaining five GCCs: U.S. Northern Command (USNORTHCOM), U.S. Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM), U.S. European Command (USEUCOM), USCENTCOM, and USAFRICOM.

In 2015, the Army has nine active component CONUS-based Army division headquarters with subordinate brigades and enablers in service.⁴⁶ These nine divisions are the following: the 7th Infantry Division based at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington; the 4th Infantry Division based at Fort Carson, Colorado; the 1st Armored Division based at Fort Bliss, Texas; the 1st Cavalry Division based at Fort Hood, Texas; the 1st Infantry Division based at Fort Riley, Kansas; the 101st Airborne Division based at Fort Campbell, Kentucky; the 3rd Infantry Division based at Fort Stewart, Georgia; the 82nd Airborne Division based at Fort Bragg, North Carolina; and the 10th Mountain Division based at Fort Drum, New York.⁴⁷ The Army has sufficient forces to assign an active component CONUS-based Army division to each of the five GCCs and still meet all required contingency missions with its remaining active component divisions.

The proposal here is for the Army to assign five of the CONUS-based active component divisions to the five GCCs, not including the three active divisions assigned the XVIII Airborne Corps: the 82nd Airborne Division, 101st Airborne Division, and 3rd Infantry Division. Those units should remain as service retained forces by the Army and available for FORSCOM mission assignment to meet global Army Contingency Force (ACF) requirements. Current mission alignment for these CONUS-based active component divisions support these assignments.

The Headquarters Department of the Army Total Army Analysis 2017-2021 (TAA 17-21) process demonstrated that if the U.S. Congress maintains the 2011 Budget

Control Act (BCA) sequestration automatic budget cuts into Fiscal Year 2016, the Army will likely continue to reduce the size of the active force. It is possible that the active component may be reduced down to 420,000 soldiers by Fiscal Year 2019. Senior Army leader guidance indicates that a way to achieve that force would be to eliminate one Army division and its subordinate brigades and field an active force of 27 active component BCTs and two multi-component round-out brigades.⁴⁸

Budget pressures influenced the Army to develop the 2-2-2-1 ACF (two Armor brigades, two Stryker brigades, two infantry brigades, one aviation brigade) for Fiscal Year 2015.⁴⁹ The Army also maintains a standing high readiness BCT designated as the Global Response Force (GRF) for immediate employment.⁵⁰ Although strategic risk would increase with an active force reduced in size to 420,000 soldiers in Fiscal Year 2019, the Army would still be able to assign five CONUS-based active component divisions to the GCCs and maintain the capability to meet its global requirements.

Army leaders may generally have two primary concerns with assigning CONUS-based divisions to the GCCs. The first is the possibility that CCDRs would exercise their COCOM authority to employ CONUS-based forces in part or whole prior to achieving their T1 training certification level. The second concern is that it would reduce the flexibility that the Army and FORSCOM maintain in managing the ARFORGEN process and sourcing missions. Army Regulation (AR) 10-87 directs FORSCOM to serve as the Army's manager for ARFORGEN, "by which the Army provides trained and ready conventional forces to the combatant commanders."⁵¹

The concern that a GCC would employ elements of its CONUS-based active component division early in training is based on Army and FORSCOM requirements

under USC Title 10. FORSCOM manages the synchronization of the CONUS-based CTCs for the Army and provides a constantly available pool of T1 certified brigades to meet the validated requirements of the CCMDs. Army leaders may be concerned that GCC employment of CONUS-based active divisions early in their training cycle would interfere with this synchronization effort and limit FORSCOM's ability to meet its Title 10 requirements to provide a consistently available pool of trained and ready brigades for employment.⁵²

The SA could alleviate that concern by directing shared ADCON of the CONUS-based divisions between FORSCOM and the ASCCs. This revised relationship would enable each ASCC to assume Title 10 training responsibility for the division that is assigned to its GCC. As a function of the shared ADCON relationship, the Army would grant authority to each ASCC to manage its CONUS-based division units' training. In addition, the Army would establish coordinating authority between FORSCOM and the ASCC to produce a specified number of CTC-trained T1 certified brigades every year. FORSCOM would retain responsibility for managing the ARFORGEN process, but would not direct which brigades would conduct CTC rotations at specified dates. Instead, the Army would establish goals for the number of CTC-trained T1 certified brigades that the ASCCs were responsible for producing each year. The ASCCs would manage the training of their CONUS-assigned divisions and coordinate with FORSCOM to achieve those goals.⁵³

Another advantage of establishing shared ADCON between FORSCOM and ASCCs for Army divisions is the opportunity to grant ASCC commanders the authority to certify brigades as T1. The advantage of transferring unit training certification

authority from FORSCOM to the ASCCs is that it eliminates the current intensive FORSCOM centralized planning and scheduling constraints and costs of sending all Army units through two CONUS-based CTCs to achieve T1 certification. The Army would gain great efficiencies by decentralizing training certification, increasing unit deployment readiness across the force, and meeting the increasing demand by GCCs for trained and ready RAF forces by establishing a training center forward in each CCMD area of operation. FORSCOM would continue to establish the training requirements, but they would be executed and certified by the ASCC. An option to support this brigade T1 certification by ASCC commanders forward would be for FORSCOM to establish mobile training teams (MTTs) who deploy forward to the proposed CCMD CTC-type training center and link up with the ASCC and brigade for training certification.⁵⁴

Feedback from ASCC leaders in 2014 supports this proposal to establish CTC-type training facilities forward in the GCC areas of operation and invest ASCC commanders with T1 training certification authority. The current cost to transport and train one BCT with vehicles and equipment from USARPAC to CONUS for a CTC rotation is \$56 million.⁵⁵ USARPAC officials believe that they could conserve resources and more effectively meet the increasing USPACOM demand for trained RAF forces by certifying brigades to T1 level forward in the USPACOM area of operation.⁵⁶ USAREUR officials also believe that they could more effectively meet the USEUCOM demand for trained and ready RAF forces by certifying brigades forward at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center (JMRC) in Hohenfels, Germany rather than at the CONUS-based CTCs. An additional advantage of certifying brigades to T1 at JMRC rather than in

CONUS is the opportunity to train RAF aligned units with multinational partners and receive NATO-specific training.⁵⁷

The second concern that Army leaders may have with assigning CONUS-based active component divisions to the GCCs is that it would reduce Army and FORSCOM flexibility in managing the ARFORGEN process and sourcing missions for the CCMDs. An example of this flexibility in action is FORSCOM's 2014 transfer of RAF mission alignment of the 1st Infantry Division's 4/1 Dragon Brigade from Fort Riley, Kansas with USAFRICOM to the 1st Armored Division's 4/1 Highlander Brigade. During the eight month period of June 2014 to January 2015, the 4/1 Dragon Brigade participated in three joint exercises in the USAFRICOM area of responsibility and deployed soldiers to 18 different countries in Africa.⁵⁸ After just eight months of regional alignment with USAFRICOM, FORSCOM then transferred that mission from the 4/1 Dragon Brigade at Fort Riley to the 4/1 Highlander Brigade at Fort Bliss. The 4/1 Highlander Brigade will conduct similar joint exercises in the USAFRICOM area of responsibility and deploy soldiers to multiple nations in Africa in 2015.⁵⁹

This authority to rapidly shift RAF mission alignment from unit to unit is highly prized by FORSCOM and Army leaders because it provides the Army with flexibility to respond rapidly to changing global threats. As senior military leaders such as General Odierno often say, this type of strategic flexibility preserves "decision space" for leaders to respond to changing conditions.⁶⁰ The costs associated with maintaining this flexibility in the execution of the Army's RAF policy must be balanced with the benefits to be gained by a more enduring and robust execution of RAF by assigning CONUS-based divisions to the GCCs.

This change would help the Army to meet the increasing CCMD RAF demand signal by providing each GCC with an assigned Joint Task Force (JTF) capable staff and increasing GCC access to trained and ready brigades and high demand Army division-level enablers.⁶¹ It would also significantly reduce the turbulence currently experienced by CCMDs, ASCCs, and Army RAF units associated with constantly creating and breaking regional relationships as FORSCOM transfers RAF mission alignment between units. Assigning active component CONUS-based divisions to the GCCs would truly regionally align the Army and operationalize the Army Vision of Prevent, Shape, Win.

Clarifying RAF Funding Responsibilities

The fourth change that the Army must make to improve RAF policy is to clarify RAF funding responsibilities. The Army must establish policies and procedures to meet funding requirements for CCMD-specific training for RAF forces and for supporting RAF operational costs. The Army is required to train and fund Army forces in accordance with CCDR requirements as described in the Global Force Management Implementation Guide (GFMIG) for assigned forces and the Global Force Management Allocation Plan (GFMAP) for allocated forces.⁶² Army leaders interpret these as requirements to provide funding and resources for brigades to achieve T1 level training certification.⁶³

However, CCMDs have additional culture, regional expertise, and language training requirements for their aligned forces in order for RAF units to be fully mission capable. Many of these training requirements are unique to a specific CCMD area of operation such as jungle, arctic, foreign weapons, or United Nations Peacekeeping Force interoperability training. The Army does not have an effective system or process to fund these training requirements and currently funds them, “on a case by case basis

as resources allow.”⁶⁴ The effect has often been for RAF units to establish their own internally funded and resourced CCMD-specific training programs to meet their mission requirements.

An example is the 2013 “Dagger University” training program established by the 2/1 Dagger Brigade at Fort Riley, Kansas to provide their soldiers aligned with USAFRICOM with CREL training prior to deployment. One aspect of this training program was direct unit coordination with the Kansas State University Africa Studies Program, which provided professors and students to engage with soldiers.⁶⁵ Although this is an example of leader ingenuity to develop and source this program at the brigade level, the Army must establish an effective set of systems and procedures to fund this type of critical CREL unit training for RAF units.

In addition to meeting the challenges associated with funding CREL training for RAF forces, the Army must establish effective systems and procedures to support RAF operational costs. RAF missions are funded in the CCMD areas of responsibility under the authority of Title 10, USC through the DoD or under Title 22, USC through the Department of State (DoS). The DoD Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) is the lead agency for executing U.S. security cooperation programs under Title 10, USC.⁶⁶ The DoS security assistance team manages security assistance funding through Title 22, USC.⁶⁷

In 2013-14, ASCC officials encountered multiple challenges to effectively fund and resource planned RAF operations. For example, in 2013 over 50% of the planned 2/1 Dagger Brigade RAF operations in the USAFRICOM area of operations were cancelled prior to execution. Lack of funding was the primary cause for these cancelled

missions.⁶⁸ Many of the challenges associated with funding RAF operations are due to lack of effective and responsive Army systems.

The Army currently provides funding for multiple named operations through the Training Program Evaluation Group (TT PEG) within the Planning, Programming, Budgeting, Execution (PPBE) process. ASCC officials have expressed concern that the Army is not prioritizing their validated CCMD requirements highly enough within the TT PEG. The Army must establish a way to inform ASCCs of whether this funding will be available for their RAF missions or whether the ASCC must request funding through their Program Objective Memorandum (POM) budget submission. This requires long-term planning and forecasting by the CCMDs and ASCCs in order to meet the requirements of the five-year Army POM cycle.⁶⁹

Another key operational funding challenge that the Army must address is that non-Title 10 funding sources for RAF differ widely by CCMD and ASCC. This makes resourcing and executing RAF missions inconsistent from region to region, which degrades the credibility of RAF forces with international partners. An example is the operational funding challenges faced by U.S. Army South (USARSOUTH) during the 2014 RAF deployment of the Georgia Army National Guard's 48th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT) to Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador.⁷⁰ USARSOUTH officials stated that approximately \$5.5 million provided for shaping operations associated with the 2014 48th IBCT deployment was provided by Army National Guard training funds under the authority of Title 10 USC, Section 12304b.⁷¹

This funding mechanism for the 48th IBCT deployment to the USSOUTHCOM area of responsibility limited the responsiveness and flexibility of the RAF unit to

USARSOUTH. This funding method required the Army National Guard headquarters to approve individual missions assigned by USARSOUTH to the 48th IBCT to ensure missions met the training requirement for reserve component use under the authority of Title 10 USC, Section 12304b. This type of separate headquarters funding review during operational missions introduces unnecessary friction between the ASCC headquarters and its aligned RAF unit.⁷² It also reduces the effectiveness of RAF forces to the CCMDs. This is an example of the current operational challenges that the Army must address by clarifying RAF funding responsibilities.

Conclusion

The RAF concept enables the Army to meet the demand of the CCDRs for consistently ready and available forces. Regionally aligned forces are prepared to conduct operations across the range of military operations and are tailored to their aligned region through CREL training. The RAF concept also embeds an expeditionary mindset in Army leaders and soldiers that supports the Army Vision of Prevent, Shape, Win.

In order to more fully realize the potential of RAF and maximize the utility of Army forces to the CCMDs, the Army must address these issues. The Army must conduct an effective RAF information campaign, reduce RAF unit rotation, assign divisions to the GCCs, and clarify RAF funding responsibilities. In an era of increasing risk and fiscal uncertainty, these changes will increase the value of the RAF policy and Army forces to the Nation.

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