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MASTER OF MILITARY STUDIES

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**TITLE:**  
TOTAL FORCE APPROACH TO SECURITY COOPERATION:  
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ARMY RESERVE?  
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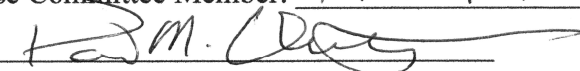
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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Title:** Total Force Approach to Security Cooperation: Can the Army's Readiness be Improved by Delegating Security Corporation to the Army Reserves?

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**Thesis:**

The Army's engagement in the protracted Global War on Terror over the last 16 years exacerbated by fiscal uncertainty has led to depleted readiness levels all while the Global threat environment becomes more volatile. As the Army pivots its focus to building the forces and capabilities to decisively defeat a near-peer adversary in a major conflict, it must delegate majority of its security corporation engagements to the Army Reserves to alleviate mission fatigue and rapidly rebuild its readiness, effectively manage the complex global security threat and provide the Army Reserves a mission-set that it is adequately qualified for.

**Discussion:**

As the nation relies on the Army to perform its heavy lifting during wartime, the Army must address its readiness shortfalls and focus on defeating a near-peer adversary in major combat operations. Concurrently, the Army must work with allies and partners globally to defeat and deter current threats. The Army Reserve can provide much-needed relief for the Active Army and is adequately qualified to take on an active role in security corporation activities.

**Conclusion:**

Although the Army has recently made significant operational changes to improve its focus on readiness by forming Security Force Assistance Brigades, the Army can do more to reduce mission fatigue and still address the current security challenges by allocating the Army Reserve as its premier security corporation force. The Army Reserve has the requisite experience and is adequately qualified to take on a bigger role in the performance of Army Security Corporation activities.

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## ACRONYMS

A2AD	Anti-access area denial
AFRICOM	The United States Africa Command
AGR	Active Guard Reserve
AREC	Army Reserve Engagement Cells
ARET	Army Reserve Engagement Teams
ARTIMS	Army Training Information Management System
ASCC	Army Service Component Command
ATFP	Army Total Force Policy
BCT	Brigade Combat Team
CSS	Combat Sustainment Support
DIB	Defense Institution Building
DOD	Department of Defense
DRE	Deployment Readiness Exercises
DSCA	Defense Support to Civilian Authorities
FHS	Foreign Humanitarian Support
FM	Field Manual
FSF	Foreign Security Forces
GCC	Geographic Combatant Command
GF	Generating Force
ICBM	Intercontinental Ballistic Missile
IED	Improvised Explosive Devices
IET	Initial Entry Training
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
MiTT	Military Transition Team
MOS	Military Occupation Specialty
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NDAA	National Defense Authorization Act
ODT	Overseas Deployment Training
OF	Operational Force
PME	Professional Military Education
PNs	Partner nations

RAF	Regionally Aligned Forces
SF	Special Forces
SFABs	Security Force Assistance Brigades
TCO	Transnational Criminal Organizations
TSC	Theater Security Corporation
US	United States
USAR	United States Army Reserve
USAREUR	United States Army Europe
VEO	Violent Extremist Organizations

## INTRODUCTION

In July 2017, while highlighting the US Army Reserve (USAR) contributions in the construction efforts of the Romanian Joint National Training Center in Cincu Romania, then US Army Europe (USAREUR) Commanding General, LTG Ben Hodges equated the importance of the Reserve Component for his mission to oxygen. Hodges said that the USAR engineers were making a lot of progress “in probably what’s going to be one of the premier maneuver ranges in all of South Eastern Europe.”<sup>1</sup> His comments highlighted US Army Europe’s (USAREUR) commitment of integrating the National Guard and Army Reserve into its team as it deals with a significant shortage of troops to effectively deter Russia and assure US allies and partners.

The Army’s engagement in the protracted Global War on Terror over the last 16 years has had a negative impact on readiness. A Government Accountability Office study completed and presented to the members of the House Armed Services Committee in 2008 noted: “ While DOD has overcome difficult challenges in maintaining a high pace of operations over the past 6 years and U.S. forces have gained considerable combat experience, our work has shown that extended operations in Iraq and elsewhere have had significant consequences for military readiness, particularly with regard to the Army and Marine Corps.”<sup>2</sup> The report also warned of the difficulty that the Department of Defense (DOD) would face in balancing mission requirements with the need of rebuilding and maintaining readiness.<sup>3</sup> Sequestration, a provision of the Budget Control Act of 2011 aimed at reducing spending through budget cuts further exacerbated readiness levels.<sup>4</sup> Meanwhile, the Global threat environment has become more volatile, characterized by inter-state strategic competition and an increase in aggressive activities below the threshold of armed conflict. Non-state actors such as Hezbollah have taken advantage of information technology advances to expand their global footprint, while the US military’s technical capability advantages continue to erode. According to Dr. Daniel Goure of the

Lexington Institute, the competitive advantage losses are due to decisions not to keep up with military modernization, and in part from commercial and military espionage by competitors.<sup>5</sup> During the 2007 Military Communication and Innovation conference, the Army's Chief Information Officer LTG Bruce Crawford warned that: "The U.S. Army, in particular, must dust off some of its aging procurement processes and leverage commercial technology to regain the advantage over its peer adversaries".<sup>6</sup> These changes in the threat environment have forced the Army to pivot its focus from counterinsurgency warfare to conventional warfare in preparation for a potential conflict with a near-peer adversary. Unfortunately, the Army does not have the luxury to solely focus on the training for a near-peer competitor. The Army must also pay attention to its engagement in the current contingency operations in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria—an increasingly belligerent North Korean regime hellbent on acquiring the capability to deliver a nuclear strike on the continental US—Iran's ambitions to be the dominant force in the Middle East,—and the aggressive spread of Violent Extremist Organizations (VEO) and Transnational Criminal Organizations (TCO). The volatile security environment will force the Army to continue building the forces and capabilities to decisively defeat a near-peer adversary in a kinetic conflict while fighting a war on multiple battlefronts and remaining globally engaged to reduce the spread of VEOs. As the Army pivots its focus on a near-peer adversary, the Army Reserve has adapted its training approach to rapidly provide forces needed in the early phases of a major contingency operation.

With 202,000 Soldiers assigned, the US Army Reserve provides critical combat sustainment support to the United States Joint Forces. In recent years, the Army Reserves has transformed from being a strategic reserve to an operational reserve capable of rapid deployment for global utilization, as evident in its role as a reliable force provider for rotational deployments during the ongoing Global War on Terror. As combat operational requirements drawdown, the

Army must find a way to keep the Army Reserves engaged to ensure its readiness does not atrophy, while providing the active Army some operational tempo relief particularly in security cooperation to improve overall readiness. Additionally, the Army must recognize the capabilities that the Army Reserves can provide to reduce global security threats and contribute to Theater Security Cooperation activities. Consequently, as the Army pivots its focus to building the forces and capabilities to decisively defeat a near-peer adversary in a major conflict, it should delegate more security cooperation engagements to the Army Reserves to alleviate mission fatigue and rapidly rebuild its readiness, effectively manage the complex global security threat and preserve Army Reserves readiness by increasing its role in security cooperation, a mission-set for which it is adequately qualified.

## **BACKGROUND**

### **Current Operational Environment**

Involvement in the ongoing protracted conflict in the Middle East coupled with a reduction in defense spending has stretched the Army too thin. Adversaries and potential adversaries have taken note and continue to position themselves in increasingly advantageous positions relative to the United States. The current global security environment is, according to Gen Dunford, the most volatile and complex security environment since World War II.<sup>7</sup> Major powers are engaged in strategic competition, while vast regions around the world face instability brought about by a rise in ideological extremism as a result of economic disparity and weak governance. To prioritize its planning, capability development, and assessment of operational and strategic risk, Department of Defense has developed the four- plus- one framework which identified the five global threats to the US national security: North Korea, Russia, Iran, China, and Violent Extremist Organizations.<sup>8</sup>

Each of the five global threats poses unique challenges that the US Army must be prepared to address. North Korea's dictatorial regime has accelerated its efforts to build an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) capable of delivering a nuclear strike on the continental United States. On November 29, the North Korean military successfully tested its most powerful ballistic missile, the Hwasong-15 which highlighted the technical advances towards an operational ICBM.<sup>9</sup> Russia continues to project an aggressive posture after its annexation of Crimea and continues to support Russian separatist forces fighting in Ukraine. President Putin seeks to expand Russia's regional sphere of influence, weaken the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Union, and play a more active role in European politics writ large.<sup>10</sup> With the objective of becoming the Middle East's regional dominant force, Iran continues to assert its influence by providing material support to Hezbollah in Lebanon, President Assad's forces in Syria and Houthis rebels in Yemen in violation of a Security Council resolution that banned Iran's arms export. Today, Iran is the leading state-supporter of terrorism in the world.<sup>11</sup> China has continued to build its military as it expands its presence in the South China Sea while investing in anti-access area denial (A2AD) capabilities aimed at limiting the US force projection capabilities. These capabilities include cyber, space, electronic warfare, and ballistic missiles.<sup>12</sup> Meanwhile, although the fight against the Islamic terrorist organizations may be yielding positive results in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria the enemy's loss of territory does not equate a reduction in the radical ideology's spread globally. In Afghanistan, US and NATO forces have reduced the Taliban from a national power to a disorganized and scattered insurgency.<sup>13</sup> In Iraq and Syria, the US-led coalition has liberated the city of Mosul from the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and expelled ISIS from its self-declared caliphate's capital, Raqqa.<sup>14</sup> However, threats from ISIS and other VEOs remain persistent. VEOs take advantage of weak governments and the proliferation of information technology to cause serious security

threats by advocating violence and government destabilization counter to the US national interest. The rise and spread of violent extremist organizations is an indicator that non-state actors are the most probable enemy that the US will continue to engage in the near term.

The complexity and globalization of the threats continue to challenge the US Army as it balances the responsibility of providing trained and equipped forces ready to fight and win against a near-peer adversary, providing forces to continue the sustained combat operations, and staying engaged globally to work with allies and partners to defeat and combat the spread of violent extremist organizations and transnational criminal organizations. The challenges are complicated further by the damage sequestration inflicted on the Army's readiness. The Army reduced its manning to historically low levels while it was engaged in a protracted war on two fronts. As the force builds back up, and the wars in the Middle East drawdown, the Army is pivoting its focus to improving its readiness to fight peer or near-peer adversaries. One of the most effective ways that the US utilizes its military power to further its national interest is by conducting security cooperation activities which include: conducting military-to-military engagements, training partner nation security forces, conducting multi-national training exercises, and providing humanitarian assistance and disaster recovery. These activities build the capabilities and capacity of partners, allowing them to deter and defeat extremists.<sup>15</sup>

The US Army's involvement in security cooperation traces back to the very beginnings of the organization itself. Then, as a consumer or beneficiary of France's security cooperation efforts aimed at limiting British expansion, the Army fought the British in a protracted conflict and prevailed, partly due to the assistance provided by France in the form of troops, arms, and supplies.<sup>16</sup> Since then, the US has been involved in providing military assistance to allies and partners to attain its strategic objectives

JP 3-20 defines security cooperation as:

“all Department of Defense (DOD) interactions, programs, and activities with foreign security forces (FSF) and their institutions to build relationships that help promote US interests; enable partner nations (PNs) to provide the US access to territory, infrastructure, information, and resources; and/or to build and apply their capacity and capabilities consistent with US defense objectives.”<sup>17</sup>

Security cooperation activities occur in peacetime as shaping operations, during all phases of armed conflict, and during post-conflict stabilization. The purpose of DOD security cooperation activities is to develop and maintain partnerships that enable partner nations to act favorably in support of United States’ strategic objectives. The US military conducts these activities in conjunction with other activities by US government agencies. These agencies represent diplomatic, information, and economic efforts aimed at the same strategic effects and end states providing necessary access, critical infrastructure during contingency operations, enhancing partner nation stability, assuring allies and partners, and preventing conflict by deterring potential adversaries.

As evident in the ongoing contingency operations, the US will always conduct its contingency operations with coalition partners. In fact, every war that the US has been involved in since WWI has included coalition partners.<sup>18</sup> In his testimony to the House Armed Service Committee in support of the President’s budget request for the Fiscal Year 2018, Defense Secretary Jim Mattis noted that “reducing regional chaos in tandem with our interagency partners and international allies to help foster a coherent order requires adequate diplomatic and military resources.”<sup>19</sup> Security cooperation efforts build close relationships with future partners and encourage participation in US-backed multinational forces, enable interoperability among coalition partners, and highlight mutually beneficial security objectives. The result is the ability of the US to pursue military objectives without having to bear 100% of the force requirements, whether it may be for contingency operations or for regional security requirements to combat

terrorist or criminal organizations. Historically, the Army Reserve has played a major role in accomplishing DOD security cooperation objectives by providing forces in support of Joint multi-national exercises, humanitarian assistance and disaster recovery missions, military construction projects, and Security Force Training and Advisory Missions. To tackle the complex security threats from both state, and non-state actors Geographic Combatant Commanders continually rely on security cooperation activities to shape the environment in favor of the US national security objectives. As the threats increase in number and sophistication the interconnected environment today means that unstable regions across the globe face a threat of further destabilization and may become safe havens for Violent Extremist and Transnational Criminal Organizations. The demand for theater security cooperation activities has therefore increased as well. To keep the Army Reserve globally engaged, the Army should assign a larger security cooperation role to the Army Reserve, and to handle this increase in demand, the Army should consider transferring the bulk of security cooperation activities to the Army Reserve.

Assigning the bulk of security cooperation activities to the Army Reserve will provide three major benefits. First, assigning security cooperation missions to the Army Reserve will alleviate mission fatigue in the active force and rapidly rebuild its readiness by improving the deployment to dwell ratios, allowing the active force to concentrate training on core competencies in a decisive action training environment, and it will provide the Army Reserve an opportunity to perform its Title 10 responsibilities. Secondly, Army Reserve forces will play a major role in the Army's contribution of managing the complex global security threat by contributing forces to reassure European allies and partners in the deterrence mission against Russia, conducting post-conflict stabilization in Iraq, Syria, and Afghanistan and assisting Geographic Combatant Commands with theater security cooperation activities in support of national security objectives. Finally, security cooperation activities provide the Army Reserves a

mission-set that it is adequately qualified for due to its preponderance of combat service support capabilities, the Army Reserve's extensive experience during the ongoing global war on terror, and the availability of unique civilian sector expertise to include law enforcement, public works, and government.

### **Security Cooperation Transformation**

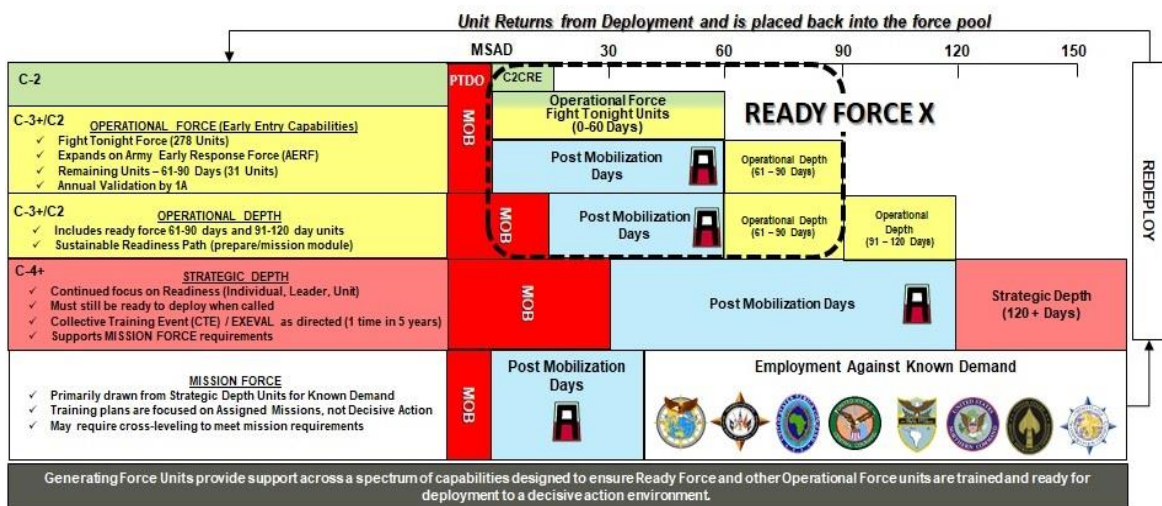
Congress, through the issuance of Title 10 authorities, has given the DOD the task of establishing partnerships with partner nations to achieve mutual security objectives. The DOD works closely with the State Department to synchronize military activities and is the force provider for Title 22 Department of State activities. Because of the September 11, 2001 attacks, Congress granted more authorities aimed at utilizing DOD resources to counter global security threats through arrangements with partners around the world. The result of the incremental expansion of authorities created more bureaucracy and complicated the execution of DOD security cooperation activities. The 2017 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) streamlined these authorities and consolidated DOD security cooperation efforts. The full implementation of the 2017 NDAA will consolidate 21 existing security cooperation programs into eight permanent programs. Of key importance, the permanent authorities granted to ensure continuity and expansion of security cooperation activities. The 2017 NDAA also formally defined security cooperation programs as any program, activity, including exercises or interaction of the DOD with security establishments. It codified security cooperation authorities that required periodic re-authorization into permanent US law. These authorities include training with military or security forces of friendly nations, providing logistical supplies and service support to forces of friendly foreign countries participating in operations with US forces, stability operations with US forces and for enhancing interoperability of forces in a combined operations; providing subject matter experts, civilian advisors to countries Ministries of Defense and security

agencies with Defense Institution Building (DIB) providing equipment services and training to security forces for building partner capacity to accomplish counter-terrorism, counter-weapons of mass destruction, counter-illicit drug trafficking, counter-transnational organized crime, border security, and military intelligence. The NDAA also required the creation and codification of the DOD security cooperation workforce development program, aimed at overseeing the training and professionalizing the DOD security cooperation community to improve the quality of professionalism of those charged with planning, monitoring, and conducting security cooperation activities.<sup>20</sup>

In realizing the threat that the current security situation poses to the US; the Army has shifted its focus and training to better position itself and recover some of the competitive edge yielded to its adversaries due to diminished funding and the involvement in the extended combat operations. To formally address the enduring advisory role the conventional army has been engaged in and to manage the growing requirements from Combatant Commanders to support security cooperation activities, the Army has created Security Force Assistance Brigades (SFABs) with forces specially trained to train, advise, and assist allied and partner indigenous security forces. The first fully operational SFAB deployed to Afghanistan in March 2018 and is conducting the training and advisory mission. By 2022, the army plans to have an SFAB aligned with each GCC. The SFABs will reside in the Active Component and the National Guard.<sup>21</sup>

In 2014, The Army Reserve created Army Reserve Engagement Cells (AREC) residing in Army Service Component Commands and Field Armies, and Army Reserve Engagement Teams (ARET) residing in Combatant Command and Corps-levels while regionally aligning its Major Commands to Geographical Components Commands. The Army Service Component Commands (ASCC), Field Armies, Combatant Commands, and Corps integrate these Army Reserve teams into their staffs. These teams made up of Active Guard Reserve (AGR) planners,

provide subject matter expertise on the capabilities that reside in the Army Reserves and facilitate access to these capabilities by advising their client staffs on the force request processes.<sup>22</sup> And in 2016, the Army Reserve overhauled its training and readiness model, developing a tiered readiness model. Its creation of the Ready Force made up of over 300 units that can respond to force requests and deploy in less than 90 days provides the Geographic Combatant Commands (GCC) with the capabilities that primarily reside in the Army Reserve and are necessary at the onset of major ground-combat operations (Figure 1). Within the Ready Force, units required to deploy within thirty days will train and remain in a heightened state of readiness. The remaining units make up the Strategic Depth units—units which could receive deployment orders but may take longer than 90 days for deployment availability due to additional training requirements—and the Mission Force, composed from Strategic Depth units training for non-decisive action operations.<sup>23</sup> The changes that the Army Reserve has made provide a framework that positions the force to engage with the ASCCs and provide forces for security cooperation while remaining ready to support rapid deployments for contingency operations.



**Figure 1. Army Reserve Training Model<sup>24</sup>**

## **ARMY RESERVE SECURITY COOPERATION**

By assigning the bulk of security cooperation activities to the Army Reserve, the Army can take advantage of existing authorities to effectively reduce the active Army's current high operational tempo, thereby freeing up more active Army units for realistic readiness generating training focused on defeating future anticipated adversaries. Utilizing the Army Reserve would also provide an opportunity to comply with the Army Total Force requirements aimed at keeping the Reserve components operational.

### **Mission Fatigue**

During a testimony to the Senate Armed Services Committee in May 2017, then Acting Secretary of the Army Spears noted that the pace of operations was higher than it had been over the previous 16 years. During the same session, Army Chief of Staff General Milley noted that the Army meets about 40 to 50 percent of combatant commanders' demands while shouldering 70 percent of unexpected emergent demands. Active Army forces rotating in and out of theaters of operation at alarmingly high ratios fulfill most of the demand.<sup>25</sup> In 2016, the global commitment load on the Army included 186,000 soldiers deployed to 140 locations around the world. In addition to forces conducting advisory and counterterror missions in Iraq and Afghanistan, these forces also included the Regionally Aligned Forces (RAF) rotations for missions in the Middle East, Korea, Europe, and Africa.<sup>26</sup> Security assistance missions that Army Special Forces (SF) have traditionally conducted have increased and overwhelmed the SF capabilities. Conventional forces assumed these roles resulting in the Army disaggregating BCTs to form advisory teams to support mission requirements in Iraq and Afghanistan. The RAF BCT assigned to the AFRICOM region suffers the same fate as its structure does not support the mission requirements. As a result, the training and advise missions increase the operational tempo and degrade readiness to the BCTs. In a February 2017 testimony to the House Armed

Service Committee, GEN Allyn the Vice Chief of Staff of the Army said that due to the operational tempo and the recurring demands the Army faced, only a third of the Army's 58 BCTs were considered ready, and only three could be immediately called up to fight in case there was a crisis.<sup>27</sup> In a letter to the Secretary of the Army, Senator James Inhofe requested the Army to assign an SFAB to AFRICOM to sustain the partnerships with African partners and relieve the RAF BCT so that it can improve its readiness for full spectrum combat operations.<sup>28</sup>

In 2007, Defense Secretary Robert Gates established a deployment-to-dwell ratio of 1:2 for active duty forces and 1:5 for Reserve forces. This was an ambitious goal, given that previous authorities for full or partial mobilization of reserve forces were only applicable in case of national emergencies and war.<sup>29</sup> The Defense Authorization Act of 2012 created the 12304b authority, which allows the Army to involuntarily mobilize up to 60,000 reservists for a maximum of 365 days. Although the Authority provided the Army with improved access to utilize its reserve forces, a 2016 report to the President and Congress conducted by the National Commission on the Future of the Army noted that the Army did not meet the dwell goals. The report also pointed out that for fiscal years 2014, 2015, and 2016, while the Army Forces Command reflected a manning shortfall of 3,000 man-years for missions that could have utilized forces mobilized under the 12304b authority, the Army programmed only one-third of the requirements for utilization by National Guard and Reserve forces. During the same period, some active Army units deployed with less than two-year dwell times while similar units were available for deployment in the Army Reserve and National Guard. The report further pointed out missions to include the Kosovo Peacekeeping, Multi-National Forward Observer Sinai and selected Theater Security Operation, which could have utilized reserve forces under the 12304b authority thereby reducing the operational tempo for active duty forces.<sup>30</sup>

By using BCTs to conduct training and advising mission in Iraq and Afghanistan, and by assigning a BCT to AFRICOM as a regionally assigned force, the Army has increased the operational tempo of its maneuver forces and degraded its combat readiness. The Army Reserve has the experience and the expertise and can conduct these missions as part of a broader security cooperation mission.

### **Training for the Most Dangerous Threat**

With an operational tempo normalized at the established goals of 1:2, active Army units returning from deployments would have the opportunity to train for operations against a near-peer adversary during their first year of return, and then focus their second year's training towards their next deployment's assigned mission. At the direction of the Chief of Staff of the Army, the Army published the new mission readiness training manual, Field Manual 3-0 in October 2017. This manual marks a major shift in doctrinal operational approach and addresses operations short-of- conflict and large-scale ground combat operations against peer adversaries. In an interview with Defense News, the Combined Arms Center Commanding General, Lieutenant General Lundy implied that the new field manual deliberately intends to divert some of the Army's attention away from the small-scale contingencies in Iraq and Afghanistan, to focus on peer-level threats.<sup>31</sup> While doctrinal changes in a large organization as the US Army may take a long time, the volatile threat presents catastrophic risks if the Army's adaptation rate fails to keep up with what the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff refers to as the speed of war. General Dunford warned of a shortened decision space brought about by the accelerated pace at the threat environment is evolving. It is, therefore, more important now than it has been in the past that the Army re-evaluate the balance of forces engaged in operations versus those training for future conflicts, to ensure that it mitigates the risks presented by engaging in major ground-combat operations with untrained forces.

## Shaping Operations

*“Shaping the choices of major and emerging powers requires a balanced approach, one that seeks cooperation but also creates prudent hedges against the possibility that cooperative approaches by themselves may fail to preclude future conflict.”<sup>32</sup>*

FM 3-0 describes the Army’s operations by breaking them down to four strategic roles that line up with the Joint Operations Phasing Model; shape, prevent, conduct large-scale ground combat, and consolidate gains (Figure 2).



[Figure 2. Army strategic roles and their relationships to joint phases<sup>33</sup>](#)

While the Army must be prepared to perform all these roles, the first two must continuously occur during peacetime while the Army trains to conduct the last two after combat operations have commenced. FM 3-0 describes the Army’s shaping operations as those actions that help counter actions by adversaries determined on challenging the stability of a nation or region contrary to U.S. interests.<sup>34</sup> They consist of long-term military engagements, security cooperation, and deterrence missions. The Army, therefore, remains globally engaged, conducting security cooperation as a conflict prevention tool.

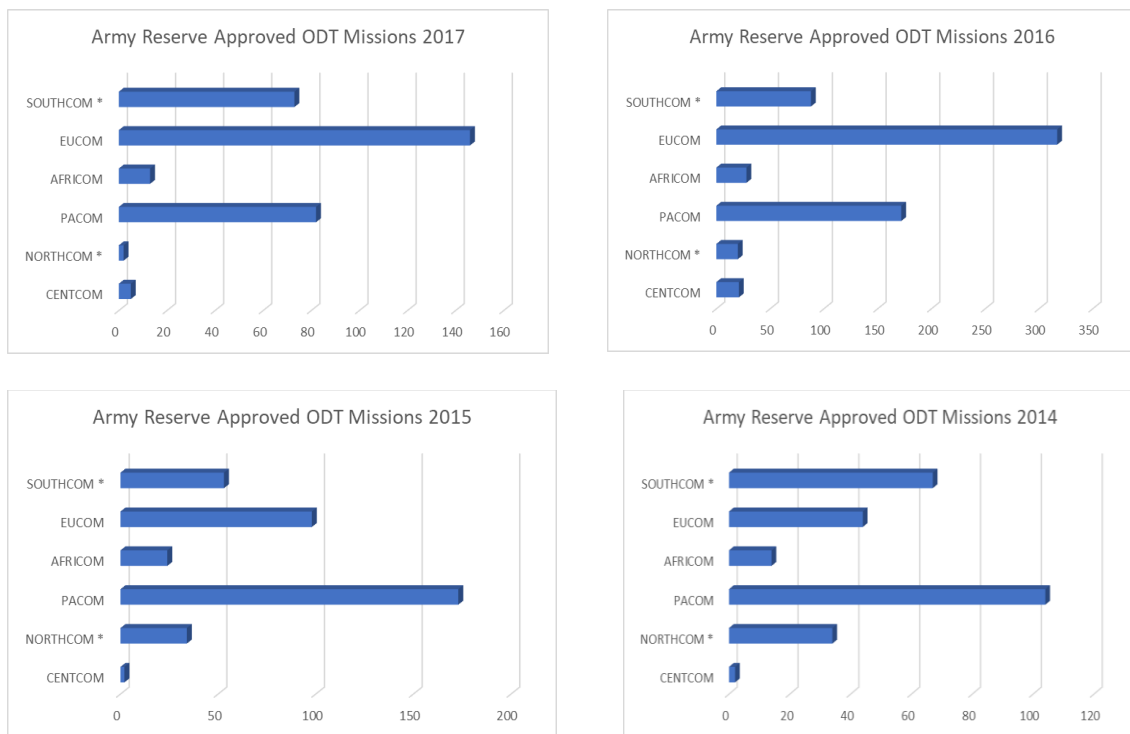
## Increased Demand for Security Cooperation

At the height of the Cold War, US Army troop strength in Europe was over 300,000 troops. Today the force is about 10% of that number yet the threat has not reduced in the same proportion. With the rise in regional and global threats from both state and non-state actors, the

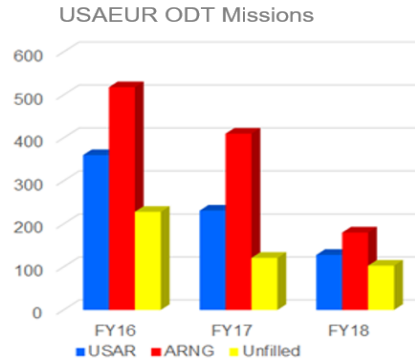
US must work with willing allies and partners to protect democratic governments, civilian lives, and US interests. With the majority of the forces focused on preparation for major ground-combat operations, the Army can leverage security cooperation operations assigned to the Army Reserve as a shaping tool and risk mitigation mechanism to deter aggression and enable partner nations to combat destabilizing elements. By conducting security cooperation activities that build partner capacity and assure allies in Europe, conducting post-conflict stabilization in Iraq, Syria, and Afghanistan and assisting GCCs with theater security cooperation activities in support of national security objectives, the Army Reserve can provide forces necessary to fulfill the increase in demand for security cooperation activities.

In Europe, the US is engaged with NATO allies and other partners to deter Russia from the expanding aggressive military actions that threaten European stability. The US forces exercise alongside multi-national forces to rehearse battle drills, deter Russian aggression and reassure allies of the US commitment NATO's shared security. The US has also committed its resources to equip and train Ukrainian forces fighting against Russian separatists. Security cooperation events conducted with partner nations allow the US military to assure allies and send a clear message to Russia that together with partners, the US can contain any efforts of aggression towards US allies. Army Reserve forces provide the capabilities to US Army Europe enabling assurance to allies and partner nations while providing credible deterrence against Russian aggression. US Army Europe successfully manages to man shortages and high operational tempo by leveraging Army Reserve individual and unit mobilization, as well as the Overseas Deployment Training (ODT) program which allows reserve units to deploy overseas for annual training. These units can perform humanitarian assistance missions, participate in training exercises, or fill capability shortfalls that align with their unit core missions. Data pulled from the Army Training Information Management System (ARTIMS) for all the Army Reserve

missions requiring more than four Soldiers for a period of more than seven days show that over the last four years, the majority of the ODT missions the Army Reserve conducted were in the European theater of operations (Figure 3). However, while Europe saw the majority of ODT missions performed by the Army Reserve, more than 200 missions went unfulfilled in 2016 and over 100 missions were unfulfilled in 2017 (Figure 4). While the demand for these types of missions will always exceed the availability of forces, part of the reasons many missions are not resourced is because the missions are not assigned. The Army Reserve’s subordinate commands self-nominate against these requirements. The Regional alignment of reserve forces also plays a significant role in determining which units conduct ODT missions. The Army Reserve aligned its major commands to different ASCCs resulting in planners not nominating available non-aligned for units for ODT. An Army Reserve could improve the ODT assignments management and increase unit utilization thereby benefiting the ASCCs.



***Figure 3. Army Reserve ODT in support of GCCs<sup>35</sup>***



**Figure 4. USAEREUR ODT Missions<sup>36</sup>**

In the Middle East, US forces are still engaged in combat operations against VEOs in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria. While the local forces provide the bulk of the fighting forces, US advisors train and mentor these forces as they assume more responsibilities in their nation’s security. Post-conflict environments require extensive Defense Institution Building efforts as is evident in the ongoing operations in Afghanistan, 16 years after Operation Enduring Freedom commenced. The Army could benefit from assigning a larger post-conflict stabilization role to the Army Reserve.

In Africa, growing VEOs threaten weak governments and terrorize civilian populations in Somalia, Southern Sudan, Libya, and Mali, while, in Nigeria, Boko Haram continues to terrorize local populations. US forces are working with partner nations to improve the capabilities and capacity of military and law enforcement organizations and limit the influence of these violent extremist organizations. Army Reserve activities in the African continent to include medical outreach programs, troop construction missions and participation in joint exercises alleviate human suffering, improve living conditions, and enable partner nations to improve security conditions and hence reduce the risk of instability.

## **Army Reserve Capabilities**

The Army Reserve retains most of the Army's Combat Service Support capabilities. These capabilities, if better aligned with security cooperation activities, will provide partner nations key subject matter expertise and allow partner nations to efficiently sustain security operations. In addition to these capabilities, the Army Reserve's role as a major force provider over the last 16 years has given the force extensive foreign nation training and advising experience and improved its readiness for security cooperation events through cross-cultural exposure. Coupled with this experience, the Army Reserve fields a force that provides unique civilian sector expertise, not available in the active component, including civilian law enforcement, public works, and governance.

Since its inception as the Medical Reserve Corps in 1908, the Army Reserve has undergone several transformations to what is today, the Army's operational reserve force, tasked with "providing operational capability and strategic depth to the Total Force and Joint Force in support of the National Defense Strategy and Army commitments worldwide."<sup>37</sup> The Army Reserve's core competency is its combat service support capabilities. With over 202,000 Soldiers, the Army Reserve provides 92% of the Joint Force's Theater bulk petroleum capabilities, 82 % of its Civil Affairs forces, 80 % of Chaplains, 69% of Sustainment Brigades and Battalions, 56% of transportation units, and 51% of the Joint Force's Medical units.<sup>38</sup> This make-up indicates that the subject matter expertise in Combat Service Support resides in the Army Reserve. To build the expertise required to sustain combat forces, US partner and allies benefit the most when paired with subject matter experts. In his article on the Small Wars Journal, Major Nicholas Keipper recommended a permanent stability operations division with key capabilities currently not available in the SFABs. Among his recommendations is a Logistics Advisors Brigade that would provide subject matter expertise in maintenance, transportation, and

medical operation at all echelons of partner nation defense institutions.<sup>39</sup> The Army Reserve is the most qualified and contains the preponderance of the forces required should the Army develop a model akin to Keipper's recommendations. The Army Reserve also includes 504 Generating Force (GF) units, whose purpose is to generate and sustain the Operational Force capabilities. These units include Training Commands that conduct Professional Military Education (PME), Military Occupation Specialty (MOS) training and Initial Entry Training (IET). Some of the Military Transition Teams (MiTT) utilized to train the Iraqi Army after the fall of Saddam Hussein included individuals serving in the Army Reserve GF. As Keipper asserts, a training academies brigade could be paramount in establishing host nation training academies and allow their institutions to re-generate the forces and capabilities US Army advisors generate during post-conflict stabilization operations.<sup>40</sup> The Army Reserve currently maintains training commands that retain talent better than the active force since the Army Reserve does not suffer the turn over implications of rotating forces through Permanent Change of Station rules.

There are differing views of whether the Army Reserve's performance in the conflicts after September 11, 2001, or regulatory changes prior to the terrorist attacks facilitated the Army Reserve's transition from a Strategic Reserve to an Operational Reserve. What is indisputable is its performance as a ready force capable of providing operational depth to the Joint Force during the last 16 years of conflict. Since 2001, the Army Reserve has mobilized and deployed more than 300,000 soldiers in support of the contingency operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as other domestic and global missions to include Theater Security Cooperation (TSC), Foreign Humanitarian Support (FHS), Homeland Defense, and Defense Support of Civil Authorities (DSCA).<sup>41</sup> With the War on Terror persisting longer than expected on two fronts, the Army Reserves stepped up and proved to be more than a mere force in waiting for the sole purpose to

provide Combat Sustainment Support (CSS) to the active Army. Reserve units rotated in and out of Afghanistan and Iraq, fighting alongside the active force, moving supplies across the theater, clearing Improvised Explosive Devices (IED) from routes, and training and advising foreign troops as they assumed more active roles in the conflicts. Reserve forces provided much-needed relief to an overtasked active force. The deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan, in turn, increased the Army Reserves readiness and expertise. Through security cooperation, the Army can retain this expertise.

Finally, while the majority of MOS skills that Army Reserve soldiers match their civilian skills, some capabilities that the Army may require during security cooperation operations do not exist as part of the Army skill set. These capabilities include experience in local government, civilian judicial expertise, and civilian law enforcement, among others. These capabilities exist in the Army Reserve, and while the US government may intend to deploy its civilian workforce to build partner nation capacity in some areas, the risks related to sending civilians in non-permissible post-conflict environments often result in the military taking on advising responsibilities in areas outside its core responsibility. In these cases, Army Reserve members with the requisite civilian expertise can bridge the capability gap until the environment is permissible to accommodate the civilian force.

### **Total Force**

*As one total force, the active Army, Army National Guard, and U.S. Army Reserve provide operating and generating forces to support the National Military Strategy and Army commitments worldwide.*

Honorable John M. McHugh  
Secretary of the Army

To comply with DoD Directive 1200.17 which established the overarching principles and policies aimed at maintaining the Reserve Components as an operational force,<sup>42</sup> Secretary of the Army John McHugh issued the Army Total Force Policy (ATFP) in 2012. The policy aims to

integrate the active and reserve components of the Army to support the National Military Strategy and global Army commitments. The policy mandated training integration at the division and below and directed the Army to utilize Section 12304b authorities to mobilize Reserve forces and take advantage of shared operational experience.<sup>43</sup> As the deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan that required a large force draws down, the Army must find a way to keep the spirit of the ATRP. Security cooperation activities provide the opportunity for the Army to retain its reserve as an operational force by keeping the Army Reserve globally engaged and employed to sharpen its skills, take advantage of its capabilities, and prevent its readiness from atrophy.

### **Benefits for more Army Reserve Involvement**

More Army Reserve participation in major ASCC exercises will serve as validation and rehearsal for contingency operations plans and improve the readiness of the Army to respond to a crisis. Capabilities such as Theater Opening, Fuel Distribution, and Civil Affairs primarily reside in the Army Reserve and hence by including these types of forces, the ASCCs will benefit from evaluating the units' performance. In return, participating Army Reserve units would be able to use the overseas training exercises as Deployment Readiness Exercises (DRE) to validate their alert, mobilization, and deployment procedures. These Army Reserve units also get a chance to acquire real-world training with coalition partners in environments that closely resemble the potential contingency environment.

More participation of the Army Reserve in post-conflict stabilization and Foreign Security Assistance will reduce the strain the current operational tempo has placed on the active Army. This will provide most of the combat forces an opportunity to train in conducting major ground-combat operations against a peer or near-peer enemy while actively deterring current threats. The Army Reserves involvement would enhance the Army's mission of building partner's capacity by providing subject matter expertise to enable future sustainment of the

capabilities that the US Army develops in these nations and thereby reducing the risks brought about by lack of security. The reduced risk for ungoverned spaces deny VEOs opportunity to regroup, train, recruit, plan and conduct attacks that threaten US national interests.

The Army will also benefit from the unique civilian skills that the Army Reserves bring to the fight. In non-permissible environments deemed too risky for the civilian force, Army Reserve forces with civilian sector expertise can bridge the capability gaps. The extensive experience that the Army Reserve has gained in the various theaters of operation over the last 16 years and the current readiness attained by this experience could benefit the Army both for mission requirement fills and to ensure utilization of reserve forces in accordance with the Army Total Force Policy objectives.

### **Drawbacks**

While mobilizing Army Reserve Soldiers has great benefits to the overall readiness of the force, there may be some drawbacks to utilizing the Army Reserve for enduring security cooperation missions. Three major drawbacks associated with reserve call-ups are the impact on the civilian profession for both the service members and their employers, the time it takes for a mobilized reserve unit attain deployment readiness, and the concern that security cooperation may hurt the mission readiness for supporting kinetic combat operations.

First, mobilization causes interruptions for both employers and service members and could lead to low retention rates in the reserve force. A 2005 Congressional Budget Office Report detailed some of the effects of continues activation. It identified that although some employers may absorb losses attributed to vacancies created by Reserve call-ups at little cost, others may experience significant operational disruptions especially if the reservist hold key positions or are highly skilled. The report, however, estimated that this number was comparatively small.<sup>44</sup> Sourcing Army Reserve units for short-duration security cooperation

missions may reduce this concern. Majority of the ODT missions in Europe over the last two years were 21 days or less, indicating that annual training periods can adequately cover these missions.

Secondly, it takes more time for a mobilized reserve unit to attain deployment readiness compared to an active duty unit. On average, Army Reserve units train for 39 days in a year. This time is not enough to accomplish all the mandatory training requirements and train for deployment missions. This forces unit to utilize the post-mobilization period to attain the proficiency required before deploying. Active Army forces are therefore better prepared to deploy on short notice than Army Reserve units. However, considering that the Army reduced the “boots on the ground” days to nine months for the total force, the concern that reserve units spend a significant amount of post-mobilization days training may not be a factor since both active and reserve units will spend nine months in the deployment environment.<sup>45</sup>

Finally, there may be concern that security cooperation may hurt the mission readiness for supporting kinetic combat operations. However, while combat operations decrease, the Army Reserve units continue to advance through the Sustainable Readiness Model. If the units become available and do not deploy, the Army loses an opportunity to utilize a ready force. As GEN Milley envisioned, the goal of the readiness model is to ultimately increase deployment of ready reserve component units to Europe, the Middle East, and Asia.<sup>46</sup>

### **Recommendations**

The Army should delegate majority of security cooperation responsibilities to the Army Reserve. While it focuses on providing the forces required for a major contingency operation, the Army must realize that the propensity of force requirements from GCCs will be for security cooperation engagements. These engagements will require non-standard unit formations and may not span complete deployment timelines. The Army must, therefore, look to the Army Reserve to

provide the structure, expertise, and forces necessary for security cooperation activities. Through the ARECs and ARETs, The Army Reserve is integrated with the ASCCs and GCCs and can provide the recommendations for the force packages required for partner nation assessments, planning, and execution missions to build partner capacity. The Army should build on the current successful development of SFABs by converting them to multi-component units and adding the capabilities that primarily reside in the Army Reserve, but necessary to conduct whole-of-government training and advising. The Army must also ensure that to comply with the ATFP, it must utilize current Authorities available to mobilize Army Reserve units according to the dwell time goals established by Secretary Gates. Security cooperation activities may provide opportunities for the Army to comply with the ATFP.

## **CONCLUSION**

The Army's engagement in a protracted counter-insurgency over the last 16 years has left it unprepared to fight a conventional war against a near-peer. Budget cuts mandated by the Budget Control Act of 2011 have caused mission fatigue and further affected the Army's readiness. Meanwhile, the global threat environment has evolved and today, while the Army provides the majority of the combat forces in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria, it must also prepare to fight a powerful military as well as sophisticated non-state actors with the ability to influence actions in multiple parts of the globe. Although the Army has made significant changes to tackle its challenges. The Army Reserve has created the Ready Force which will provide combat-ready troops ready for deployment on short notice to enable the Army's conventional fight against a peer or near-peer military, while the new Security Force Assistance Brigades in the active Army and National Guard will provide some flexibility and deploy to support security cooperation missions across the globe. However, the Army can do more. by delegating a majority of its Security Corporation engagements to the Army Reserves to facilitate a slower operational tempo

necessary for the active Army units hence reducing mission fatigue, and to allow units to train for operations other than counter-insurgency while managing the current threats. The change will provide the Army an opportunity to continue the Total Force Implementation goals while taking advantage of the Army Reserve's make-up, experience, and capabilities to provide GCC Commanders with the ability to conduct deterrence operations and assure US allies and partners of the US commitments against potential adversaries and allow the GCCs to continue building partner capacity in regions threatened by instability and violent extremist organizations.

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