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DUAL STATUS: A UNITED STATES ARMY RESERVE MILITARY TECHNICIAN PROGRAM DILEMMA

BY

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91-00622
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REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

Form Approved
OMB No. 0704-0188

1a. REPORT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION UNCLASSIFIED			1b. RESTRICTIVE MARKINGS None		
2a. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION AUTHORITY None			3 DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY OF REPORT Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited.		
2b. DECLASSIFICATION / DOWNGRADING SCHEDULE N/A					
4. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER(S) N/A			5. MONITORING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER(S) N/A		
6a. NAME OF PERFORMING ORGANIZATION U.S. Army War College		6b. OFFICE SYMBOL (If applicable)	7a. NAME OF MONITORING ORGANIZATION U.S. Army War College		
6c. ADDRESS (City, State, and ZIP Code) Carlisle Barracks, PA 17013-5050			7b. ADDRESS (City, State, and ZIP Code) Carlisle Barracks, PA 17013-5050		
8a. NAME OF FUNDING / SPONSORING ORGANIZATION Same		8b. OFFICE SYMBOL (If applicable)	9. PROCUREMENT INSTRUMENT IDENTIFICATION NUMBER N/A		
8c. ADDRESS (City, State, and ZIP Code) Carlisle Barracks, PA 17013-5050			10. SOURCE OF FUNDING NUMBERS		
			PROGRAM ELEMENT NO. N/A	PROJECT NO. N/A	TASK NO. N/A
11. TITLE (Include Security Classification) Dual Status: A United States Army Reserve Military Technician Program Dilemma UNCLASSIFIED					
12. PERSONAL AUTHOR(S) MacLawrence Gaskins					
13a. TYPE OF REPORT MSP		13b. TIME COVERED FROM 1972 TO 1991		14. DATE OF REPORT (Year, Month, Day) 91/04/09	
15. PAGE COUNT 31					
16. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTATION Military Studies Project is a requirement for students of the U.S. Army War College					
17. COSATI CODES			18. SUBJECT TERMS (Continue on reverse if necessary and identify by block number) Reserve, Military Technician, Dual Status Mobilization, USAR, Full Time Support		
FIELD	GROUP	SUB-GROUP			
19. ABSTRACT (Continue on reverse if necessary and identify by block number) The Department of the Army (DA), Reserve (USAR) units for national defense, is currently confronted with a dilemma. The dilemma is a result of the Army's commitment to provide the USAR units with full-time support personnel that will mobilize with the units when called upon to do so. It is centered around efforts to improve one element of the USAR full-time support (FTS) Program, the Military Technician (MT) Program. All civilian members of the MT Program are required to be Reservists in the unit they support as a condition of employment. Known as dual status, this requirement is the source of the dilemma. This requirement gives the MT Program its uniqueness and without it military technicians are not different from other DA civilians. Since implementation, the requirement has caused numerous problems in administering the MT Program. With the creation of the Active Guard/Reserve (AGR) Program, another element of the FTS Program, many believe the dual status requirement has outlived its usefulness. In an environment of reduced force structure and reduced funding, the Army is committed to (CONTINUED ON REVERSE)					
20 DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY OF ABSTRACT ☒ UNCLASSIFIED/UNLIMITED ☐ SAME AS RPT ☐ DTIC USERS			21 ABSTRACT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION UNCLASSIFIED		
22a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE INDIVIDUAL CHARLES E. HELLER			22b. TELEPHONE (Include Area Code) (717) 258-4220		22c. OFFICE SYMBOL AWC1

a program that is mandated by public law while the single requirement that makes the program unique is questioned by the program's work force and administrators. This study project will examine the events leading up to this current dilemma and how the Army can solve it without eliminating the MT program.

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USAWC MILITARY STUDIES PROGRAM PAPER

DUAL STATUS: A UNITED STATES ARMY RESERVE MILITARY
TECHNICIAN PROGRAM DILEMMA.

AN INDIVIDUAL STUDY PROJECT

by

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ABSTRACT

AUTHOR: MacLawrence Gaskins, Lt Col, USAR
TITLE: Dual Status: A United States Army Reserve Military Technician Program Dilemma.
FORMAT: Individual Study Project
DATE: 9 April 1991 PAGES: 28. CLASSIFICATION: Unclassified

The Department of the Army (DA), as the agency responsible for providing well trained United States Army Reserve (USAR) units for national defense, is currently confronted with a dilemma. The dilemma is a result of the Army's commitment to provide the USAR units with full-time support personnel that will mobilize with the units when called upon to do so. It is centered around efforts to improve one element of the USAR Full-Time Support (FTS) Program, the Military Technician (MT) Program. All civilian members of the MT program are required to be Reservists in the unit they support as a condition of employment. Known as dual status, this requirement is the source of the dilemma. This requirement gives the MT program its uniqueness and without it military technicians are no different from other Department of the Army civilians (DACs). Since implementation, the requirement has caused numerous problems in administering the MT Program. With the creation of the Active Guard/Reserve (AGR) Program, another element of the FTS Program, many believe the dual status requirement has outlived its usefulness. In an environment of reduced force structure and reduced funding, the Army is committed to a program that is mandated by public law while the single requirement that makes the program unique is questioned by the program's work force and administrators. This study project will examine the events leading up to this current dilemma and how the Army can solve it without eliminating the MT Program.

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INTRODUCTION

Dual status requires MTs to be unit members of the Troop Program Unit (TPU) they are hired to support as technicians; however, technicians employed in areas other than TPUs need only be members of the Selective Reserve in a military position compatible with their civilian position. The dual status requirement of the United States Army Reserve (USAR) Military Technician (MT) Program was debated before mandated by Public Law (P.L.) 98-212, Section 783 on 8 December 1983. With the passage of P.L. 98-212, Congress embodied in law a requirement (which is the intent of the law and its first order effect) that has become a source of controversy for the Department of the Army (DA) and has created unanticipated second order effects which currently impact on the readiness of the USAR and the National Guard (NG). Limiting its scope to the USAR, this paper will examine the events leading up to the passage of P.L. 98-212, identify the problems caused by the dual status requirement, and recommend actions that DA can implement to deal with its current dilemma effectively.

THE USAR FULL-TIME SUPPORT (FTS) PROGRAM

In order to understand the Army's dilemma it is necessary to understand the USAR FTS Program and its components. The mission of the FTS program is to increase USAR unit readiness and to enhance USAR units ability to rapidly mobilize and deploy in the event of an emergency. This mission is accomplished by providing

full-time personnel to perform those tasks that either cannot be performed by part-time soldiers or if performed by Reservists would consume valuable training time.

To accomplish its mission, the FTS Program is organized into four categories; United States Army Active Component (AC) soldiers, Active Guard/Reserve (AGR) soldiers, MTs, and Department of the Army civilians (DACs). According to Department of Defense (DoD) policy "AC personnel are AD (Active Duty) members paid from active DoD appropriations assigned or attached to RC (Reserve Component) organizations and units by their respective Services to provide advice, liaison, management, administration, training, and/or maintenance support. It is current DoD policy that AC personnel shall be used primarily to provide current AC military advice for doctrine, training, exercises, inspections, etc. to ensure the highest readiness possible of RC units, be assigned to validated positions in Selected Reserve units, and mobilize with those units." 1 AC soldiers are considered to be mobilization assets.

AGR soldiers are Reservists on AD to support the RCs as authorized by the Secretary of Defense. They occupy positions in USAR units; in major subordinate commands; Headquarters (HQs), DA; and in DoD. AGR personnel provide Reserve expertise throughout DoD and must be assigned to positions that are Reserve related. (AGR soldiers are prohibited from performing Active Army duties.) "AGR personnel are assigned to RC-validated positions in units and will mobilize with the units they support. They provide direct support to prepare RC units for their wartime mission." 2

AGR soldiers are considered to be mobilization assets.

DACs are hired to provide administrative support to USAR units. They are not required to be members of the Selected Reserve and have no mobilization mission.

MTs are civilian employees that must have dual status as military members of the Selected Reserve. Membership in the Reserve must be with the unit they support as civilians. In addition to units, MTs serve on the staffs of Major United States Army Reserve Commands (MUSARCs) and in USAR support activities; for example, Army Maintenance Support Activities (AMSAs) and Equipment Concentration Sites (ESCs). Normally, MTs assigned to support activities fulfill the dual status requirement by being members of the Individual Mobilization Augmentee (IMA) Program; not as unit members. "It is DoD policy that MTs be used primarily to provide highly skilled support to wartime deployable Selected Reserve units, be assigned to validated technical positions in these units, and to mobilize with the units they support." 3 The MT Program is considered to be a military program and MTs are considered to be mobilization assets. There are a small number of MTs who do not have dual status. They are referred to as "status quo" personnel. According to DoD policy "Status quo personnel are individuals who were unable to maintain or obtain military status while continuing their CS (civilian) employment. It is DoD policy for the status quo population gradually to be attrited." 4

As currently organized, the FTS Program has two categories of Reservists. The AGR Program provides full-time Reservists and the MT Program provides part-time Reservists. In the past, the Army

has supported both categories. As a result of problems administering the MT Program, many members of the MT work force and program administrators, below DA level, question the necessity for the MT Program to remain a military program. Members of the MT work force would like to retain the MT Program as a unique entity without the dual status requirement.

HISTORIC PERSPECTIVE

The United States Army Reserve Military Technician Program was established shortly after the end of World War II when the Army recognized the need for some type of FTS to promote readiness and insure effectiveness of Reserve units. The Army's idea then was to provide soldiers who could be available as mobilization assets and provide day-to-day administrative support to the Reserve unit, allowing citizen soldiers to train on drill weekends. Originally, Congress did not warm to the notion of utilizing full-time soldiers. After all, in peacetime the idea has always been to maintain a small standing Army. Therefore, the Congress authorized the use of civilian employees as unit aides.

The dual status concept developed as a result of the Army's desire to have personnel who could mobilize with and assist the Reserve units when needed. Eventually the Army had its way when dual status was established by a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between DA and the U.S. Civil Service Commission in 1960. At that time individuals who were unit members or eligible for Reserve membership were the primary source of MT recruitment.

THE 1970's - PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT AND EXPANSION

In 1970 a renegotiated MOU between DA and the Civil Service Commission made Reserve unit membership a required condition of employment. At that time MTs need only be a unit member in the Reserves, not necessarily in the unit they supported as civilians. This renegotiated MOU created some problems. First, the requirement seriously constricted the pool of available recruits for the technician positions. Many of the applicants with desired experience were retired active or reserve service persons, and, therefore, automatically eliminated by the dual status requirement. Also, there were applicants who had either no desire to become Reservists or could not meet the physical requirements. Another problem was that the positions incorporated two sets of job requirements, military and civilian, both of which were required to be met. In the case of positions such as Unit Administrator (UA) it was difficult to match civilian duties with the military position in the unit.

Despite these problems, the potential for improving unit readiness was apparent during the early years of the program. Yet, the conflicting laws and regulations governing civilian employment and military service made the program difficult to administer and, over time, additional problems gave rise to the current dilemma.

Since the early 1970's, there had been an increased awareness at DA of the necessity for adequate full-time manpower in the Reserves to assist in improving their mobilization capability.

The Army's belief in having mobilization assets available to support Reserve units was intensified by the adoption of two major policies by the Army in the 70's: the conversion to an All Volunteer Army and the introduction of the Total Army Policy.

Since the origin of the All Volunteer Army, the USAR suffered through the same problems of strength maintenance, mobilization readiness and image projection as the AC. This resulted in renewed interest throughout DA in developing new initiatives, better training, and a more responsive mobilization capability for the USAR.

With the advent of the Total Army Policy in the early post Vietnam era (1973), the Army placed a greater emphasis on the use of the RCs. As an integral part of the Total Army, the USAR could no longer be considered primarily as a source of replacements and fillers. The USAR was given additional missions and was called upon to assume far greater responsibilities upon a mobilization that was to be conducted in a much shorter time period. This dramatic decrease in the required mobilization/deployment reaction time reinforced the Army's belief in the need to have full-time mobilization assets in the Reserves. Increased readiness could only be achieved with an expansion of the FTS Program.

When the impact of the All Volunteer Army and the Total Army Policy are considered in conjunction with an economy in a period of stagflation, it was understandable that the Army tried to solve the problem of increasing USAR readiness by seeking alternatives to the MT Program.

While the Army was attempting to address this major issue,

the previously mentioned dual status problems surfaced. In response to these problems, various studies were undertaken to attempt identify how the Army could provide additional mobilization assets to the USAR and at the same time solve the problems within the MT Program.

As early as 1974, several studies recommended some form of relaxation of the requirement to maintain military membership as a condition of employment as an MT, especially in the AMSAs and ECSs. The findings recognized that requiring MTs to mobilize and deploy with TO&E units could add value to unit readiness, however, in the event of mobilization, MTs assigned to units other than the ones they supported on a daily basis, would not be in position to add value to the readiness of those units. Eliminating dual status for the MTs assigned to AMSAs and ECSs would solve this dilemma since they would assist all USAR units in the region mobilize.

On 19 April 1976 the Defense Manpower Commission, in a report to the President, concluded that "the objectives of the MT program could be met at substantial savings by ultimately replacing the technicians with full-time active duty Guardsmen and Reservists. ... Implementation of this change would eliminate dual pay and retirement for what in essence was the same job." 5 At issue here was the expense of pay, allowances and retirement for full-time soldiers versus the cost of reserve pay, civilian pay and retirement pay for MTs.

Later studies reached markedly different conclusions. For example, in 1978 the Office of the Secretary of Defense found that

"existing full-time support systems can, when properly funded, managed and manned produce the desired combat readiness." 6 In June of that year, the OASD (Manpower, Reserve Affairs and Logistics) Report on Full-Time Training and Administration of Selected Reserve stated that "The sole reason for the technician force is to satisfy a military requirement to the same extent as active duty personnel. Thus, the military considerations of the technician program are paramount." 7 This finding was later supported by the GAO Report B-152420 of 26 February 1979 which stated "The dual status technician force was established to satisfy a military need much the same as the active military force. Therefore, the military requirement should be the primary consideration." 8 At the end of the decade, the Army was still seeking solutions to the problems associated with providing personnel for peacetime support and as mobilization assets to the USAR.

THE 1980's - EXPANSION OF THE FULL-TIME SUPPORT PROGRAM

The decade of the 1980's began in an environment that was marked by the Army experiencing great difficulties due to civilian manpower reductions. The Army requested and received permission from Congress to expand the full-time support to the Reserve by testing the concept of utilizing full-time Reserve personnel. Congressional approval was a result of dissatisfaction with some aspects of the MT Program. Specifically, the cost of the program, status quo technicians and the MT union representation caused

great concern. House Report 95-1398 of House Appropriations Committee on DoD's FY 1979 Appropriations Bill recommended the Army conduct the test to determine its ability to attract and retain qualified full-time Reservists. The Army implemented the test in 1979-1980. These soldiers formed what is known today as the AGR Program. During the initial stages of the test 1,276 USAR MT positions were converted to AGR positions. Many higher grade MT positions were replaced with AGR officers.

The test was viewed by the MT work force with a great deal of mistrust of the Army. When the Army's intent to do away with the MT Program became obvious to them, the MT work force became fearful and sought support in Congress. As a result of intense lobbying by the MT union and individual members of the MT work force, Congress not only halted the test, but intervened on behalf of the MT work force by enacting P.L. 98-212 on 8 December 1983. This law contained sections that insured the survival of the MT program. Realizing that its goal of having full-time soldiers would be set back with the passage of P.L. 98-212, during the mark up of the law the Army supported Section 783 (dual status requirement) as a part of the bill.

Overshadowed by the conversion test and P.L. 98-212 were several studies conducted to address problems in the MT Program. As in the 1970's, the findings varied with each study. In 1980, the Sills Study Group stated that it believed "maximum unit readiness upon mobilization could be produced most effectively when all the day-to-day support personnel mobilized with the unit they support." 9 Their recommendations included a statement

reinforcing the position that dual status was required to fulfill a military requirement for mobilization and that this need should be the primary consideration when discussing dual status.

In 1983, The Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel (ODCSPER) conducted a Reserve Component Management Study. The study recommended strict enforcement of the DA policies that stated that the primary purpose of the MT Program is to satisfy a military requirement and dual status is essential. In other words, the MT program is a military program. In 1985, when confronted with the dual status problem, DA's Reserve Component Coordination Council (RCCC) upheld the dual status requirement. It was, the Council said, based on the rationale that the need for skilled, technically proficient, full-time personnel as unit members during mobilization (mobilization assets) far exceeded the difficulties associated with peacetime dual status policy.

While DA was reinforcing the dual status requirement, the MT union representation was arguing for its elimination. In 1986, a MT Task Force study stated that:

"Major points of emphasis of union groups before Congress in the past have been:

- Competitive civil service for NG (National Guard).
- Eliminate AGR program.
- Eliminate dual status requirement.
- Abolish mandatory uniform wear in NG.
- Clear changes of work schedule with union.

Strong union testimony was given before two Congressional committees in FY 85 - The Defense Subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee and the Investigations Subcommittee of the House Committee on Post Office and Civil Service.

The grievances included:

- AGR program.
- Selective retention.
- Compatibility requirements (NG).

- Uniform wear in NG.
- Dual Status." 10

In September 1988, the Department of Defense released DoD Directive number 1205.18 which stated that all MTs must maintain dual status as drilling RC members in the same unit they support as a condition of employment. The directive also stated "The policy of 'dual status' for MTs is designed to improve the mobilization readiness of the RC units to which the MTs are assigned or provide support." 11

Clearly, DA's and DoD's desire to have mobilization assets to support the USAR units remained the paramount consideration in the 1980's. Yet when the decade ended there was still a great deal of concern in the MT work force. Many still held on to the premise that the problems in the MT Program would be resolved if the dual status requirement was relaxed or eliminated.

Dual status was discussed at the Senior AGR Personnel Conference on 7 November 1989. It was concluded that: MTs do not work in their military capacity on drill weekends, dual status stifles employment potential, and some lower pay grades may be very qualified in administration positions, but are unqualified for military service. Elimination of the current USAR requirement for the MT or to occupy a military position in a unit of assignment was recommended. If the MT is in the USAR, he or she does not have to belong to the unit in which employed. They may be in another unit, or in the IMA Program or serve as an Individual Ready Reservist. In any case, military status should be highly encouraged.

Lack of military proficiency by MTs has created an additional

problem in the area of recruiting and retaining qualified Reservists. The perception by Reservists (unit members) is that the UAs occupy key military positions that they are not qualified to occupy. Reservists who are qualified for the military position are blocked from aspiring for promotion within the unit. To further their careers many Reservists join other units or change their military status (reassignment to the IMA Program or to the Individual Ready Reserve).

Not only are Reservists affected by the UA's blocking key military positions, but the UA's military career and civilian career are adversely affected by the requirement to be assigned to the unit supported. The impact on recruiting MTs was discussed earlier. In the 1980s the problem expanded to affect the retention of MTs. As Reservists, the MT work force must be considered for promotion during their careers. Upon selection for promotion, the MT has three options available: identify a military vacancy at the higher grade for which he is qualified within his unit, identify and be accepted for both a vacant MT position and a military vacancy at the higher grade in another unit, or decline the promotion. Likewise, if the MT qualifies for a civilian promotion with another unit, there must also be a military vacancy in that unit. The difficulties involved in either a military or civilian promotion have led to many MTs concluding that the program does not have reasonable career potential. In 1989, the chain-of-command addressed this aspect of the MT Program by seeking and receiving an expanded definition of the term 'unit'. Prior to that time the term unit referred to

company and below activities. Under the new guidance, the term unit refers to a 'mobilization entity'. This can be interpreted to include any unit that mobilizes together. This expanded definition provides relief to the relatively small number of MTs assigned to units such as a Separate Brigade or a Training Division.

THE 1990's - CURRENT PROBLEMS

Relaxation of the dual status requirement continues to be of concern to the field. This concern was clearly articulated in a memorandum from the Chief of Staff, First United States Army to Forces Command, dated 17 January 1990, "The Mil Techs in an Army Maintenance Support Activity (AMSA) do not perform their duties in the AMSA in a military capacity during peacetime or upon mobilization, so the required mobilization assets argument is not valid. AMSA support to the early phase of the mobilization process is critical. It cannot provide this essential support when 97% of its personnel have to deploy with TPUs/IMA agencies." 12 The mobilization assets argument was questioned not only with regard to AMSAs and ECSs, but with regard to MT positions located at Army Reserve Command (ARCOM) headquarters. (ARCOM headquarters provide command and control of reserve units on a regional basis during peacetime; they have no wartime mission.) MTs at ARCOMs occupy positions such as management analysts and budget officers; duties that will be performed by other Army organizations during mobilization and war. It is clear that dual status does not add value to positions of this nature in this type of unit.

Additional problems with administering the MT Program continue to be reported by the field commands. In most cases, again, some form of relief from the dual status requirement was the issue. Its negative impact on recruiting a quality MT work force has resurfaced as a major problem. The MT Program requires an applicant to qualify not only for the technician position but also meet, and maintain the requirements for membership in the USAR. The recruitment problems center on the fact that many of the applicants with the desired experience are retired military service persons, active and reserve. Because they are unable to meet the military requirement, dual status automatically eliminates this large pool of available recruits. Added to the fact that many desirable applicants do not desire to be in the military or cannot meet the physical requirements for military membership, the MT program has a constricted pool of applicants who satisfy the criteria of mobilization asset. In addition to recruitment, problems in other areas of the MT Program are also attributed to the dual status requirement. The program has limited career progression. P.L. 98-212 and DoD Directive 1205.18 require MT job descriptions be compatible with the duties and responsibilities of the assigned military positions. MTs must be qualified under both civilian and military criteria of the two designated positions. In the case of UAs at company level, it is extremely difficult to match their civilian duties with a military position in their unit. With few exceptions, during mobilization, deployment, and post-mobilization, most of the duties performed by the UAs are performed by higher headquarters or other units and

the UA's unit would not have a compatible military administrative position to assign the UA. Although this situation is minimized at higher organizational levels, the problem has adverse effects on the units that need full-time support the most, isolated small units. When one considers the fact that most USAR units are not colocated with their higher headquarters, the concern is significant.

The requirement for dual status has resulted in another major problem at the unit level. By job description, the UA is the representative of the commander on a day-to-day basis. In this capacity, he or she is thrown into a direct or assumed supervisory role over the full-time force which is made up of AGR, AC or other MT personnel, many of whom are senior in military grade to the MT. The problem is two-sided and counterproductive. Over time, there have been numerous complaints from the UAs stating that they cannot supervise FTS personnel who outrank them. On the other hand, FTS personnel who outrank the UA are subject to be rated by someone of lesser rank. The perception is that this rating scheme will adversely affect their military careers. The prevalence of these situations has not been verified but reports from the field indicate the problem still exists, despite all of the efforts of the chain-of-command to clarify and rectify the situation. During a Forces Command (FORSCOM) USAR MUSARC Commander's Conference, held on 18 November 1989, the General Officers attending stated that the problem of day-to-day supervision still existed and dual status complicated the issue. Their recommendation was to eliminate the dual status requirement as soon as possible;

specifically, change P.L. 98-212. It is clear that the final authority for resolution of this issue rests with the unit commander.

The FORSCOM Reduction of Administrative Workload (RAW) Task Force stated after a visit to the 310th TAACOM in April 1990, "The UA is not eligible for various incentives (bonuses that Reservists can qualify to receive), the positions are GS 5/6, pay is low, responsibilities are great, and dual status creates supervisory conflicts - consequently there is high turnover of UAs in the USAR." 13 Much of the dissatisfaction and resultant personnel turbulence in the MT Program is attributed to the supervisory conflicts caused by the dual status requirement. This opinion was voiced by personnel throughout the FTS Program, from the UAs to the senior commanders.

During the 1990's the difficulty of assigning the UAs to military positions compatible with the duties of their civilian position created a larger problem that has a direct impact on mobilization readiness. Over time, the administrative duties performed by UAs have expanded greatly. It is generally acknowledged that the duties performed day-to-day by the UAs do not comply with the compatibility requirement. Another current problem centers on the fact that UAs utilize the monthly drill time as an opportunity to perform civilian duties that require interaction with the unit's Reserve membership and do not train as Reservists. This is done in good faith to accomplish tasks that in the long run contribute to the mobilization readiness of the unit. However, by neglecting their military duties during weekend

drills and Annual Training, many UAs are not militarily proficient and cannot qualify for promotion and, in some cases, retention in the Reserves. Carried one step further, in the event of mobilization and deployment, the UA's lower level of proficiency will adversely affect the unit's readiness status. The question becomes; is the UA a mobilization asset?

Another current issue that has been criticized as a result of the dual status requirement is qualifying for retirement in the MT Program. Since MTs must maintain membership in the Selective Reserve to retain their civilian position, many MTs must remain active in the Reserves beyond twenty qualifying years of service until such time that they are qualified for a civil service retirement annuity. (This requirement further exacerbates the perception that MTs block key military positions and deny other Reservists promotional opportunities.) Many MTs have expressed concern about unfair treatment because they can not retire after twenty years of honorable military service. They believe their rights as Reservists are being denied. The issue becomes more critical if the MT reaches his or her mandatory removal date (MRD) prior to qualifying for a civil service annuity. MRD is an established date at which time a Reservist must leave active Reserve duty. Ordinarily, a Reservist must retire or be discharged at that time. Normal MRD for Reserve Officers is the completion of twenty-eight years of commissioned service or in some cases, age fifty. MRD for Reserve enlisted is based on time in service and the highest grade held. For Reservists who enter the MT Program, after several years of service in the Reserve, the

dual status requirement would normally require them to forfeit their civil service annuity. To protect these individuals and to improve the MT Program, Congress provided a partial solution to this problem by allowing these personnel, on a case-by-case basis, to remain active Reservists until age sixty, irregardless of their MRD. Requests for waivers to remain on active duty beyond MRD must be forwarded to DA for approval. Another unanticipated effect of the law impacts on the retirement issue. In order to insure the viability of the MT Program, Congress has, with one exception, mandated minimum levels of personnel in the MT Program each year. The pressure to comply with the law combined with problems mentioned earlier has resulted in many commands hiring individuals into the program who have no chance to qualify for a civil service annuity without a waiver. As the MT work force ages there will be an ever increasing number of individuals requiring a waiver to qualify for an annuity.

As a federal employee, dual status also impacts on MTs qualifying for a civil service annuity. Public Law 99-335 requires all new federal employees hired after 1 January 1987 to participate in the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS), to include MTs. To qualify for the early retirement annuity, a MT must be age fifty with at least twenty years of service. To qualify for an immediate retirement benefit, a MT must be age sixty with twenty years of service or must have reached his or her minimum retirement age and have thirty years of service. In order to qualify for an early civil service annuity; a MT who enlisted at age nineteen, completed his required military training at age

20, must be promoted to at least the grade of E-8 during his career. If not, he will reach his MRD prior to accumulating thirty years of service. He will be unable to remain on AD long enough to qualify for an immediate annuity. (He will reach MRD for an E-9 at age 55.) The argument can be made that the MT Program does not provide reasonable expectation to be eligible for an immediate civil service annuity - without a waiver.

The Army must implement changes that will improve the FTS program. DoD has contracted the RAND Corporation to conduct a two year study which will provide the basis for its guidance on the roles and uses of the various categories of FTS personnel. DoD expects to publish this guidance in 1992. The Office of the Chief Army Reserve (OCAR) is preparing a survey for the entire MT work force which will be used to improve the MT Program. The results of these efforts and additional feed back from Desert Shield and Desert Storm should provide a basis for program improvement.

CONCLUSIONS

DA, as the agency responsible for providing well trained USAR units for national defense, is currently confronted with a dilemma. The dilemma is a result of the Army's commitment to provide USAR units with full-time support personnel that will mobilize with the units when called upon to do so. It is centered around efforts to improve one element of the USAR FTS Program, the MT Program. The requirement to maintain dual status as a condition of employment in the MT Program is the dilemma. This

requirement gives the MT Program its uniqueness and without it MTs are no different from DACs. Since implementation, the requirement has caused numerous problems. With the creation of the AGR Program many believe the dual status requirement has outlived its usefulness. The Army finds itself committed to a program that is mandated by public law while the single requirement that makes it unique is questioned by the work force and many administrators.

Since its inception, the MT Program has been under the constant scrutiny of Congress and its investigative agency, the Government Accounting Office. Since the Army's attempt to eliminate the program in 1979, Congress does not believe the MT Program will be administered properly without their oversight. Although dual status has created many problems and the MT population would support some form of relaxation, any attempt by the Army to have the most important piece of legislature for the MT Program, P.L. 98-212, amended would be seen as an attempt to weaken the MT Program by Congress. Mistrust of the Army's intent remains high because it is not responding to the many problems in the MT Program.

The real problem between the Army and the MT work force is one of perspective. On one hand, the MT work force and Reserve unit members believe all the problems will be solved if the dual status requirement is altered; on the other hand, if the Army complies and alters the dual status requirement, it will eliminate the MT Program as a unique entity. This would be unacceptable to all parties. Upon analyzing the many arguments presented to alter dual status, a very strong argument can be made that the major

problem centers around implementing the FTS Program, specifically the MT Program -not the statutes governing the programs. Many of the concerns surrounding dual status can be resolved with better program management.

As the first step toward program improvement, the Army must answer the question of whether the MT work force should be mobilization assets. Does the requirement for MTs to mobilize and deploy with the supported Reserve units add value to USAR unit readiness?

The Army's answer to this question, as previously indicated, has changed over time. In the early 1950's the Army had requested AC soldiers be authorized to perform full-time support to the USAR. Congress responded by providing civilian unit aides. At the Army's insistence, the 1960 MOU required the MTs to be Reserve soldiers. Although this was not the preferred solution, these part-time soldiers provided the USAR with mobilization assets. The Army considered the 1970 MOU as improvement because it required the MT workforce to be Reserve unit members. This action was intended insured full-time personnel would be available to mobilize and deploy with each USAR unit. As stated earlier, the events of the 1970's (The Total Army Policy and The All Volunteer Army) re-emphasized the need for additional USAR mobilization assets. In response to the need, the Army began providing full-time Reservists (AGRs) to the units in 1979. At that time the Army desired to replace MTs with these AGR soldiers in deploying USAR units.

As recent as 1985 the Army's plan was to gradually realign

the FTS structure so that ultimately MTs will serve in non-deploying support activities and soldiers (AGR and AC) with deploying units. In their final report, the MT Task Force formed by OCAR stated that "When the realignment is finished, the nature of the MT function will have become more in line with traditional civilian personnel duties and responsibilities, thus it is expected that more favorable career progression opportunities will develop for MTs. While military experience and reserve expertise will always remain a qualification element in technician recruiting, the need for dual status should diminish over time."¹⁴ It is clear that the Army has always sought to have full-time mobilization assets assigned to USAR units. Soldiers were preferred and failing that, MTs were required to be part-time soldiers to assure availability during mobilization.

Since the FTS program has two elements (AC and AGR) that have the flexibility to mobilize at any given moment, the critical question can now be answered. Having the MT work force accompany the supported USAR units to their mobilization stations does add value to unit readiness. Having the MT work force deploy with the unit does not add value to readiness. I conclude that the Army should retain MTs as mobilization assets; but, not as deployment assets. I conclude that MTs should be required to have dual status as condition of continued employment.

The elimination of dual status would result in the elimination of the MT Program. An examination of the current MOU between DA and the Office of Personnel Management reveals that dual status is the only requirement that separates the MT work

force from civil service. Without it there is no basis for a separate MT Program. In today's environment of budget reductions, defense manpower reductions, and continued mistrust of the Army, elimination of the dual status requirement would not be favorably received by Congress.

Obviously, the current environment of mistrust and lack of confidence in the Army must be addressed. Clear communications prior to action is the solution to this problem. The MT work force, its union and Congress must understand that future changes are designed to improve the MT Program; not destroy it.

With proactive management, the problems that many believe can only be solved by the elimination of the dual status requirement, can be addressed by the Department of the Army. The MT Program is an effective category of the FTS Program, does contribute to USAR unit readiness, and the problems in the program can be overcome.

RECOMMENDATIONS

I recommend DA implement program changes that would increase the effectiveness of the MT work force by requiring them to mobilize; but not deploy. The MT work force can best support USAR units by performing the administrative functions that must be accomplished at the MOB stations after the units have deployed. There will be a myriad of tasks to be done after deployment. After completing those tasks, the MT work force can further support the units and add value to unit readiness by returning to the Reserve centers and operating rear detachments that will

provide needed family support services to the unit dependents. The senior MT can serve as the unit commander's official representative. The preliminary reports from Desert Shield and Desert Storm indicate there is a critical need for a stay behind element to assist families during deployments. The MT work force is ideally suited for this mission.

Further, I recommend that the MT Program be restructured in the following manner:

A. Create Drilling IMA Augmentation Detachments assigned to the USAR MUSARCs. They should be called Military Technician Support Detachments (MTSDs). Since all MTs are assigned to a MUSARC Augmentation TDA as civilians, the creation and organization of MTSDs would be relatively easy to accomplish. All MTs under the MUSARC's command would be assigned to this unit with duty at the supported USAR units (attachment to the supported units is acceptable). Under this concept MTs would be prevented from being members of deployable USAR units. In the event a USAR unit is mobilized, its MT work force will be called to active duty as individuals to accompany the unit to the MOB station and return to the Reserve center after unit deployment. The MT work force will perform their MTSD monthly drills and Annual Training with the supported units. The advantages of this organization are many. The recruiting and retention problems in the MT program will be lessened. MTs will have military promotional opportunities throughout the MTSD structure. A civilian career program for MTs will exist up to the MUSARC level. The day-to-day supervisory problem will be lessened. The role of the MT work

force will be clarified. The opportunity for unit Reservists to be promoted to the positions currently incumbered by the MT work force will exist. Most important, transition to this organization can be accomplished with no disruption of current operations.

B. MTs employed at all support activities; that is, AMSAs, ECSs, Reserve Training Sites, Combined Support Maintenance Shops, Organization Maintenance Shops, Army Aviation Flight Activities, Army Aviation Operating Facilities and Army Aviation Support Facilities should be assigned to the recommended MTSD. This would eliminate the current problem of early deploying MTs at these sites. Their presence at the support activities during unit mobilization would be assured. If required, these MTs could be mobilized and attached to regional MOB stations after the supported units have reported to the MOB stations.

C. MT positions at MUSARC headquarters should be eliminated. Other than providing the command with staff funding flexibility (access to another pay account) having MTs on MUSARC staffs gives no added value.

If adopted, these recommendations would solve many of the problems discussed in this paper. Although one could argue that full-time soldiers or civilians could perform many of these functions, these recommendations are preferred because they comply with the intent of P.L. 98-212.

Implementation of the recommendations would cause minimum disruption in the day-to-day operations of the USAR units. Actually the required changes should be transparent to the units. DA would retain the current funding flexibility it has now (access

to RPA, OMA, and OMAR funds). DA would have to identify funds for the MTSD; however; the cost is justified. If implemented properly, that is, with prior notification and education, these recommendations would placate Congress and the MT work force. Implementation would require no major amendments to P.L. 98-212. The term 'assigned' in Section 783 of the law might have to be changed to read 'assigned or attached' or to read 'with duty at'. Clearly, a minor amendment involving one section of the law. Also, the current MOU would have to be changed to reflect the new terminology.

ENDNOTES

1. U.S. Department of Defense, Directive Number 1205.18, 20 September 1988, p. 2 (hereafter referred to as "Directive No. 1205.18").

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid., p. 3.

5. U.S. Department of Defense, Defense Manpower Commission, Defense Manpower: The Keystone of National Security, Report to the President and the Congress, 19 April 1976, p. 127.

6. U.S. Department of the Army, U.S. Army Forces Command, Full-Time Support (FTS) to the USAR (Sills Study) Final Report, 16 June 1980, p. IV-2.

7. Ibid.

8. Ibid.

9. Ibid., p. IV-3.

10. U.S. Department of the Army, Office of the Chief, Army Reserve, USAR Technicians, Final Report, May 1986, p. L-2.

11. Directive No. 1205.18, p. 2.

12. U.S. Department of the Army, First U.S. Army, Request for Reconsideration of Model Installation Program (MIP) Initiatives FCFI00010 and FCFI00012, 17 January 1990, pp. 1, 2.

13. U.S. Department of the Army, U.S. Army Forces Command, FORSCOM RAW Task Force Trip Report, 22 April 1990, p. 2.

14. USAR Technicians Final Report, p. ii.

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