

*USS Curts conducting
underway replenish-
ment from USNS
Walter S. Diehl.*



Fleet Combat Camera Group Pacific (Kevin H. Tierney)

Seapower and the Reserve Components

By GORDON I. PETERSON

After the United States was attacked on 9/11, Coast Guard, Navy, and Marine Reservists did not wait for President George Bush's mobilization proclamation of September 14, 2001 to spring into action. Within minutes, Coast Guard Reservists reported to their active duty units in the tri-state

New York City metropolitan area to support relief and emergency rescue operations at the site of the World Trade Center. Within days, more than 1,100 bolstered the ranks of active duty personnel engaged in security operations at ports and along waterways around the United States.

Each of the seven Reserve components responded similarly on 9/11 and during the following months, often without waiting to be ordered. "Before the fireball disappeared from above the Pentagon, Air National Guardsmen

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Marine Reservists training for urban warfare.

U.S. Marine Corps (Damian McGee)

and Air Force, Navy, and Marine Reservists were patrolling the skies over Washington, D.C., New York, and several other American cities," said Thomas Hall, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs. "They volunteered and responded to the Nation's needs without hesitation and with a deep sense of purpose."¹

At the peak of their mobilization in response to the President's declaration of a national emergency, nearly 38,000 sea service Reservists were on active duty by spring 2003: 4,442 Coast Guard, 21,316 Marine Corps, and 12,045 Navy. For the Coast Guard and Marine Corps, this mobilization represented more than half of their selected Reservists (SELRES).

Just as the war on terrorism represents a watershed in national security affairs, it has also obliged the Department of Defense (DOD) and the services to reassess their Reserve organizations, including their resources and how they mobilize and demobilize. In July 2003, Secretary Donald Rumsfeld directed the Secretaries of the four military departments, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the Under Secretaries of Defense to rebalance active and Reserve capabilities. He indicated that the relationship is not optimal for future needs and that three initiatives are needed:

- structuring active and Reserve forces to reduce the need for involuntary mobilization of the Guard and Reserve
- establishing a more rigorous process for reviewing joint requirements
- making mobilization and demobilization more efficient.

The Navy and Marine Corps were well under way in reviewing their Reserve components before Rumsfeld's tasking. The Coast Guard, a multimission and military service assigned to the Department of Homeland Security,

the Coast Guard Reserve is best described as a force provider for its parent service

also launched a strategic assessment of its Reserve component in 2003 to address post-9/11 mobilization needs.

Based on their service-unique organizations, missions, experiences since 9/11, and visions of the future, all the sea services are taking steps to reshape, realign, or rebalance their Reserve components to meet 21st century requirements.

Team Coast Guard

The Coast Guard Reserve is best described as a force provider for its parent service. Under the *Team Coast Guard* concept implemented in the

1990s, individual Reserve training units were eliminated and selected Reservists were integrated into active operational units. This provision for force augmentation allows the service to use trained Reservists for day-to-day operations and surge units for emergent missions such as disaster relief following a flood, environmental cleanup of an oil spill, or DOD contingency operation overseas—while continuing to perform traditional missions.

Contrasting the Coast Guard Reserve with the other services' Reserve components, Vice Admiral Thomas Barrett, Vice Commandant, said, "Our Reservists come in different packages; one size doesn't fit all."²

Of its 8,000 selected Reservists, the Coast Guard mobilized more than 5,400 following the 9/11 attacks, the most since World War II. Given its lead role for maritime homeland security, it assigned the majority to the United States to support units safeguarding military loadouts in ports and participate in Liberty Shield. The surge mode during the past two years saw Reservists mobilized primarily as individuals assigned to active fleet units; the six port security units (PSUs) are a principal exception.

Each PSU numbers 135 selected Reservists and 5 active duty members. While mainly intended for harbor defense and port security overseas, the units can be employed for homeland security missions. PSUs should be prepared to deploy within 96 hours.

Some 550 selected Reservists deployed overseas during expeditionary operations in support of the Coast Guard's Title 10 responsibilities as part of the war on terrorism during Iraqi Freedom. Most served in the four PSUs deployed to the U.S. European and Central Command areas of responsibility in the Mediterranean and Arabian Gulf. "[Reservists] have been tremendously effective in helping us meet the surge requirement," said Admiral Thomas Collins, Commandant of the Coast Guard.³ Vice Admiral Timothy Keating, then commander U.S. Fifth Fleet and Naval Forces Central Command, also

Naval Reserve F/A-18
aboard *USS Theodore
Roosevelt*.



USS Theodore Roosevelt (Brad Garner)

praised Coast Guard Reserve-augmented units during Iraqi Freedom, telling the U.S. Naval Institute Forum 2003, "They are employed around the clock" providing port security and interdicting oil smuggled out of Iraq.

Reserve augmentation also enabled the Coast Guard to add new capabilities to its force structure. The first four maritime safety and security teams were commissioned in 2002 and more are planned. These fast-response teams, modeled after PSUs, will improve security in ports, waterways, and coastal areas. Similarly, virtually all Coast Guard sea marshals are Reservists, trained law enforcement personnel who board high-interest merchant vessels in militarily or economically strategic ports to prevent acts of terrorism.

The Reserve component began incremental growth during FY03 and is expected to stabilize at 8,100. "A robust and well trained Reserve force . . . is an integral part of the Coast Guard's plan

to provide critical infrastructure protection, coastal and port security, and defense readiness," Admiral Collins told Congress in March 2003. "Funding is essential to properly maintain readiness, alignment with DOD counterparts, and to provide critical capabilities to DOD combatant commanders."⁴ Faced with an increased operating tempo and limited resources, growing and aligning this workforce to the level required to support operational commitments in all mission areas remains the biggest challenge.

The Reserve's top goals are aligned with the Commandant's direction in the areas of readiness, people, and stewardship—including maximizing the mobilization capability of the Reserve workforce, growing and training a capable force to support operational missions, and delivering measurable results that support the Coast Guard and Department of Homeland Security.

Rear Admiral James Van Sice, Director of Reserve and Training at Coast Guard Headquarters, led efforts in 2004 to capture the lessons learned from post 9/11 recalls to develop a better trained and more ready Reserve force. Key to this work is a Reserve Strategic Assessment that identified 84 readiness gaps and actions to correct them. The first phase was completed in early 2004. "The goal is simple—to have the right people with the right skills in the right places to meet the spectrum of contingencies we face," Van Sice said.

The Coast Guard is also assessing its manpower requirements, including those that dictate the missions and size of the Reserve. A flag-level working group charted by the Commandant will recommend the missions most suitable for the Reserve and its overall size. The goal is to ensure that the Reserve has the mix of competencies and force structure to continue to support

Port security unit loading onto C-5 at March Reserve Air Base, Enduring Freedom.



U.S. Coast Guard (Daniel Tremper)

Coast Guard missions while being ready for emergency mobilization.

A Force Multiplier

The mission of the U.S. Naval Reserve Force is to provide mission-capable units and individuals to the Navy-Marine Corps team throughout the range of operations from peace to war. Numbering some 690,000 in 2003, the force consists of the Ready, Standby, and Retired Reserve. As with the Coast Guard and Marine Corps, SELRES is the Navy's primary source of immediate mobilization manpower and represents Reservists who are paid as weekend drillers or serve in full-time support on active duty status in the training and administration of the Naval Reserve Force program.

In addition to numerous subordinate commands, Naval Reserve Force ships serve under the operational control of the two Navy fleet commanders for the Atlantic and Pacific. Naval Air

Force Reserve squadrons are equipped with some of the most modern aircraft and technology.

During congressional testimony on Guard and Reserve issues in May 2003, Vice Admiral John Totushek, Chief of Naval Reserve, described a "remarkably challenging and successful" year.⁶ Recruiting and retention were generally up. Today, integration of Re-

integration of Reserve personnel on all levels of the Navy training organization continues

serve personnel on all levels of the Navy training organization continues as part of the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) Sea Warrior initiative. Force shaping continues in the form of aligning Naval Reserve operations to make them more flexible and responsive to support the fleet.

There were few bright spots in recent years in the modernization of

Naval Reserve equipment and information technology systems, however. Equipment procurement fell from \$229 million in FY97 to \$91 million in FY03. Substantial investments are needed for C-40 logistic-support aircraft, F/A-18 strike-fighter modifications, P-3C maritime patrol aircraft upgrades, and SH-60B helicopters.

The Reserve has mobilized nearly 23,000 personnel since 9/11 to augment the active force and units across the full spectrum of Navy operations. In 2003, it provided 19 percent of the total force for only 4 percent of the Navy budget. According to Totushek, the majority mobilized represent unique specialties, including law enforcement, security, medical, intelligence, and supply. "The seamless integration of the Reserve and active components as a total force in the global war on terrorism has been a resounding success," said Hansford Johnson, Acting Secretary of the Navy.⁷

All Navy mission capability for fleet support airlift, naval coastal warfare, inshore undersea warfare, naval embarked advisory teams, and naval control of shipping comes from the Reserve. Originally designed to protect ships in foreign ports following the terrorist attack on the guided missile destroyer *USS Cole* in October 2000, naval coastal warfare groups, for example, have been deployed continuously around the world since 9/11 to secure ports for follow-on forces and support sea-basing operations. "After 11 September we realized the force multiplier that [CNO] and the [Marine Corps] Commandant have available with their Reserve components," said Harvey Barnum, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Reserve Affairs.⁸

Naval Reserve personnel and units have distinguished themselves in numerous ways during the war on terrorism. Strike-Fighter Squadron 201, a tactical squadron based at Naval Air Station Fort Worth, was recalled to active duty for 10 months in 2002, including a 5-month combat deployment on the nuclear-powered *USS Theodore Roosevelt*—the first Navy tactical Reserve squadron deployed aboard an aircraft carrier since Korea.



Navy Reservist conducting coastline watch at Guantanamo Bay.

Fleet Combat Camera (David P. Coleman)

The squadron flew 324 combat sorties during Iraqi Freedom as a fully integrated unit of 8th Carrier Air Wing. Composed of experienced aviators and support personnel, it ultimately led the air wing in target acquisition, destruction of targets, sortie completion, and grades for carrier landings. Helicopter Combat Support Squadrons 4 and 5 performed similar yeoman's service, providing all Navy combat search and rescue during Iraqi Freedom as well as supporting Special Operations Forces. Allocating all of a mission capability to the Reserve force does pose important considerations regarding the active/Reserve mix during prolonged mobilization.

The scope and duration of the Naval Reserve mobilization has also presented challenges similar to those encountered by Reserve counterparts in all services. "Times of crisis are always stressful for the active or Reserve

servicemember and their family," said a spokesman for the Naval Reserve Force.⁹ "For the Reservist, however, being recalled to active duty involves a significant change in their employment and, in many cases, their pay, lifestyle, family health care, and geographical location."

Because a recall is generally unplanned, Reservists suffer when their military pay is less than their civilian wage. They may risk losing their civilian jobs or quality medical care for themselves and their dependents.

In 2002, Admiral Vern Clark, Chief of Naval Operations, ordered a comprehensive active/Reserve force mix study, which specifically addressed potential shortfalls and high-demand/low-density unit requirements. The initial area of change involved antiterrorism and force

protection personnel. Additionally, newly established active component security force assets are being created to provide the fleet with a unit and point defense previously filled by Reserve naval coastal warfare forces.

Clark and Barnum also commissioned a study in 2002 to determine methods of transformation for the Naval Reserve to be integrated with the active force in a way that supports Clark's *Sea Power 21* vision for Navy transformation.

In his *CNO Guidance for 2004*, Clark directed the Chief of Naval Reserve and Commander, Fleet Forces Command to report the potential improvements to achieve two-way integration of the Navy's active and Reserve components, streamline Naval Reserve headquarters, and increase Reserve access to active platforms and equipment. As Clark told the Naval Reserve Association at its 50th anniversary conference in 2004, "The active and



U.S. Coast Guard (Danielle DeMarino)

Coast Guard Reservist guarding containers aboard *USNS Mendonca*.

the Reserve elements are going to be partners like never before.”

Vice Admiral John Cotton, Chief of Naval Reserve, told the Senate Armed Services Committee in March 2004 that the Naval Reserve was “changing our culture and the shape of the force, moving away from an obsolete Cold War construct to one that provides tailorable, flexible capability in support of 21st century warfighting.”

To achieve this goal, the Navy began in 2004 to integrate its Reserves

the Navy began in 2004 to integrate its Reserves into the Fleet Response Plan

into the new Fleet Response Plan through both unit level and individual augmentation for day-to-day operational support while maintaining the ability to mobilize Reservists and equipment to support expanded surge operations. In an effort to align missions by capabilities, Commander, Naval Reserve Force in Washington, and Commander, Naval Reserve Forces Command in New Orleans, were assigned “additional duty” to Commander, Fleet Forces Command in Norfolk.

“For the first time ever,” Cotton said, “one fleet commander acting for all other Navy commanders is conducting a zero-based review, where every Reserve unit and billet is being reviewed for capability relevance and alignment with fleet requirements and then forwarded to CNO for inclusion in future budget deliberations and requests.”

Looking to the future, Cotton maintains that improving accessibility and integration will be the Naval Reserve’s cornerstones for its contribution to readiness. “Collocating our Reserve personnel and hardware with their supported fleet units streamlines the activation process, enabling individuals to train alongside, and be more familiar with, the units they will augment.”

Train, Mobilize, and Deploy

The mission of Marine Forces Reserve (MFR) is to augment and reinforce active Marine forces in time of war, national emergency, or contingency operations; provide personnel and operational tempo relief for the active forces in peacetime; and offer service to the community. It is the headquarters command for all 100,000 Reservists and nearly 300 units at

nearly 200 sites nationwide. The largest command in the Corps, it has four major subordinate commands: 4th Marine Division, 4th Marine Aircraft Wing, 4th Force Service Support Group, and Marine Corps Reserve Support Command.

The Reserve has been closely integrated with the active component under a Total Force concept in recent years. Reservists provide individuals and specific units to augment and reinforce active capabilities. At the peak of mobilization during 2002 to 2003, 21,300 were on active duty in support of Noble Eagle, Enduring Freedom, and Iraqi Freedom; 75 percent of SELRES marines activated participated in combat operations in Iraq. More than 7,000 Reservists were activated to support Iraqi Freedom II early in 2004.

Unlike the Army, the Marine Corps did not transfer capabilities—combat support units, for example—horizontally from its active to Reserve component during the Cold War. This policy is consistent with the Marine Corps’ dependence on the readiness of its total force of active and Reserve marines. “Our posture as forward deployed forces in readiness does not allow us to have combat support or combat service support functions primarily in the Reserve structure,” said Lieutenant General Emil Bedard, Deputy Commandant for Plans, Policies, and Operations.¹¹ “We strive to ensure our Reserve forces are as well trained and as ready as our active forces.”

Reservists achieve high levels of readiness by integrating into ongoing exercises and training, including two combined-arms exercises per year conducted entirely by Reserve forces. This focus ensures that mobilization readiness for such contingencies as Iraqi Freedom is the top MFR priority at all times. “We were able to mobilize quickly and efficiently,” said Lieutenant General Dennis McCarthy, Commander, Marine Forces Reserve. “One reason for this is Marine Corps Reserve units do not plan for or require post-mobilization training. Our plan has always been to train first so we are ready to mobilize and rapidly deploy.”

Coast Guard and New York City Police harbor unit, Liberty Shield.



U.S. Coast Guard (Mike Hvozda)

True to their tradition of being “first to fight,” the Marines—active and Reserve—are trained for combat in the most likely battlefields of the 21st century. Reserve marines of Company I, 3^d Battalion, 24th Marines, for example, journeyed to Fort Campbell with their battalion to improve their urban combat skills during two weeks of annual training.

The Marine Corps Reserve achieved its recruiting goals in 2002 and 2003 despite the challenge of high retention in the active component—a prime prior-service source for accessions. The long-term impact of sustained or repeated mobilizations on recruiting and retention is still undetermined, but it will be assessed as large numbers of Reservists are demobilized. Increased funding in the Reserve procurement and operations/maintenance accounts during FY02 contributed to a “good” general state of readiness, McCarthy told Congress in May 2003. Like

the Naval Reserve Force, however, MFR aviation and ground equipment continues to age faster than replacement rates, reflecting a policy decision by the Marine Corps to fund current readiness accounts for both its active and Reserve components at a higher priority than recapitalization and transformation.

“Maintaining these aging legacy platforms requires increased financial and manpower investment with each passing year due to parts obsolescence and higher rates of equipment failure,” McCarthy said. “Aircraft maintenance requirements are increasing at an approximate rate of 8 percent per year. For example, for every hour the CH-46 [helicopter] is airborne, it requires 37 man-hours of maintenance.”¹²

While MFR mobilization in 2002 and 2003 generally progressed smoothly (98 percent of SELRES marines called up for duty reported, and less than 1 percent requested a deferment, delay, or exemption), there were difficulties integrating and synchronizing SELRES augmentees into selected Marine Corps Reserve units.

“We need a system to mobilize sailors together with their Marine units, and we need to ensure their individual training readiness is on par with the Marine unit they will join for future operations,” maintained McCarthy. For the near term, his top priorities are to ensure that all MFR marines and sailors are deactivated as soon as their missions are accomplished and to support them and their families during the transition back to civilian life.

McCarthy seeks to prepare Marine Forces Reserve for future action, which “will require strong recruiting, retention, and training programs, and providing the modern equipment needed for the next battles in the global war on terrorism.”

Lessons learned during Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom are being reviewed and applied. According to McCarthy, “The biggest lesson so far is that most of what we were doing before 9/11 was right on target—we were able to mobilize quickly and efficiently. Overall, Marine Forces Reserve

successfully augmented and reinforced the active component of our Corps.”

New capabilities will be added to Marine Forces Reserve, including an intelligence support battalion, two security battalions, and an augmentation command element for 3^d Marine Expeditionary Force. Efforts are also being directed to ensure that MFR units have compatible equipment to remain interoperable with active units, which is especially important in digital communications. MFR is also fine-tuning the process for individual

Marine Forces Reserve will build on a tradition of training, mobilizing, and deploying personnel and units to augment the active force

augmentation to ensure that marines mobilized individually are fully qualified and certified for their duties, especially in the joint arena.

During a February 2003 visit with marines in Qatar, General Michael Hagee, Commandant, said, “I understand from the numbers that two-thirds of you here are Reservists. I know you simply as marines—and looking at performance I can’t tell the difference.”¹³ As part of Hagee’s top priorities during 2004, the Marine Corps continues to strengthen total-force transformation, including continued improvement of the active/Reserve mix.

The road ahead for Marine Forces Reserve will build on a tradition of training, mobilizing, and deploying personnel and units to augment and reinforce the active force.

The One Force

According to Thomas Hall, the total force concept for the Guard and Reserve is “alive and well,” but the issue confronting DOD in the post-9/11 era is the policy for “the one force.”¹⁴ The current Reserve mobilization process, tied to the Cold War and a “time-phased deployment plan for the Fulda Gap,” is not responsive or timely. “We mobilize just in case, not just in time.”

Hall’s concerns over mobilization were reflected in an August 2003 report by the General Accounting Office

on Reserve call-up following 9/11. The study found that the process was inefficient and existing operation plans failed to accurately identify mobilization requirements. These concerns, coupled with the mix of capabilities required in the active force, underline the current DOD initiative to rebalance the Guard and Reserve before increasing active component end strength.

The challenge facing DOD is that today’s active/Reserve mix was crafted in the post-Vietnam period when conscious decisions were made to place critical support capabilities in the Reserve components—when it was vowed that the United States would never go to war again without Reserve mobilization. “They are on the front lines all too regularly now, with debilitating effects on recruiting and retention,” Major General Thomas Wilkerson, former Commander, MFR, told the U.S. Naval Institute Forum 2003. “They are ridden hard and put to bed wet on many occasions.”

The post-9/11 era also introduced a new national security strategy calling for the preemption of terrorist threats against the United States. Noted Admiral Barrett, “This is a fundamental paradigm shift” that will affect the size and mix of Reserve capabilities for commanders.

The Reserve components of the sea services are confronting these issues head on as they assess the events of the past three years. The winds of change are blowing hardest in the direction of the Naval Reserve as Navy leadership implements fundamental adjustments to its size, organization, resources, end strength, and alignment with the active force.

The Coast Guard Reserve and Marine Forces Reserve will also adjust their policies and programs in light of ongoing studies, service-unique experiences in support of the war on terrorism, and the impact of extended mobilization on the ranks of their Reservists—all with an eye on military effectiveness and affordability.

Sea-service Reservists have made significant contributions to the fight

against terrorism at home and overseas in keeping with the rich traditions of citizen soldiers. The challenge facing the services is to refine a mobilization process, active/Reserve capability mix, and alignment in a way best suited to 21st century realities. This adjustment from the Cold War structure must be made in a way that sustains a unique repository of experienced, dedicated Reserve professionals without placing a disproportionate burden on their shoulders.

JFQ

NOTES

¹ Thomas F. Hall, statement before the Subcommittee of the House Committee on Government Reform, U.S. House of Representatives, April 29, 2003.

² Thomas J. Barrett, remarks during U.S. Naval Institute Forum 2003, Arlington, Va., September 4, 2003.

³ Thomas H. Collins, interview with *Sea Power*, vol. 46, no. 8 (August 2003).

⁴ Collins, statement before the Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation, U.S. House of Representatives, March 13, 2003.

⁵ Robert J. Papp, “View from the Bridge,” *The Reservist* (May–June 2003), p. 4.

⁶ John B. Totushek, statement before the Senate Appropriations Committee, Defense Subcommittee, May 7, 2003.

⁷ Hansford T. Johnson, statement before the Senate Appropriations Committee, Defense Subcommittee, April 2, 2003.

⁸ Harvey C. Barnum, Jr., interview with *Sea Power*, vol. 45, no. 2 (February 2002), pp. 9–15.

⁹ Jack Hanzlik, e-mail to author, September 5, 2003.

¹⁰ Vern Clark, interview with *Navy Times*, August 13, 2003.

¹¹ Emil R. Bedard, statement before the Senate Armed Services Committee, Readiness and Management Support Subcommittee, April 9, 2003.

¹² Dennis M. McCarthy, statement before the Senate Appropriations Committee, Defense Subcommittee, May 7, 2003.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ Thomas F. Hall, U.S. Naval Institute Forum 2003, Arlington, Va., Sept. 4, 2003.