

MAXIMIZING PRE-MOBILIZATION TRAINING AT HOME STATION

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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

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ABSTRACT

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The current mobilization policy directs deploying reserve component units to serve at least 365 days on active duty. This policy requires much of the training the mobilized unit previously completed at the mobilization station and after they were mobilized now must be completed prior to their mobilization date to allow maximum use of the mobilized unit's deployment. This paper examines what steps were taken to facilitate this new method of training and how the army can improve these processes to maximize boots on the ground time for each deployment. It will research the advantages of pre-mobilization training conducted at home station. Finally, this paper will examine the responsibility given to each component for pre-mobilization training and recommend how each component can become more efficient in the 21st century.

MAXIMIZING PRE-MOBILIZATION TRAINING AT HOME STATION

On 19 January 2007 Secretary of Defense Robert Gates directed reserve component (RC) units would serve a maximum of 12 months on active duty for each deployment.¹ The policy prior to this required each deployed unit to mobilize, train, and then depart for their given theater to serve 365 days “Boots On the Ground” (BOG)² in addition to time spent at the mobilization station. With each deployment now limited to a total of 365 days, each post mobilization training day now counts against the 365 total days, leaving fewer days for the unit to serve in its mission during the deployment. This new policy requires that much of the training the mobilized unit previously completed at the mobilization station (MS) after they were mobilized, must now be completed prior to their mobilization.

This SRP examines efforts to enable units preparing for upcoming mobilizations to put BOG as quickly as possible under this new requirement. Tasks mobilized units are currently completing at home station (HS) prior to mobilization are examined in this review as well as suggestions on which additional tasks could be completed at HS to further reduce the post-mobilization requirements. This SRP offers recommendations on how the Army can improve its processes to maximize the BOG portion of each deployment while ensuring that the combatant commander receives RC units fully capable of accomplishing all assigned tasks. Finally, this SRP examines each component’s responsibility for pre-mobilization training. To begin, we must first understand the current mobilization process.

There are five phases of mobilization. Phases I and II take place at HS in the pre-mobilization training, then Phases III, IV, and V take place after mobilization. This new

policy seeks to reduce the burden of mobilization on RC Soldiers and their Families. By reducing the total length of time for each mobilization, it has accomplished this. But the new policy has created hardships for units training to deploy and for the receiving combatant commanders. This SRP examines current mobilization processes and suggest ways of improving these processes. Each level of command from Department of the Army (DA) on down must be willing to carefully examine their current processes and embrace changes that will allow units to streamline the mobilization process. Additionally these organizations must update current policies and in some cases seek regulatory changes to facilitate future mobilizations. The Army must strive to identify units required to mobilize up to two years prior to mobilization. Finally, this SRP examines how we can observe the new Secretary of Defense (SECDEF) policy while providing a trained unit to the combatant commander.

Background

Current FORSCOM Regulations. Prior to 19 January 2007, Forces Command (FORSCOM) had the “luxury” of mobilizing reserve component units long before their Latest Arrival Date (LAD).³ If a unit required 180 days of pre-mobilization training, the unit’s total mobilization time would be 18 months-six months of training time in addition to the 12 months of overseas deployment. In an effort to reduce the hardship on RC Soldiers, their employers, and their Families, the Department of the Army (DA) changed the mobilization policy to 12 months total deployment time per mobilization to meet the SECDEF’s directive.

Today the post-mobilization training time is considered part of the 12-month long mobilization. This change has provided a strong incentive to find ways of shortening the

post mobilization training time required. Regardless of methods used to shorten pre-mobilization training time, we must ensure that all mobilized Soldiers are fully trained in every task required of them and their unit in theater.

Current FORSCOM Regulations. One of the current problems with mobilization residing in FORSCOM is failure to update or supersede applicable regulations. Current regulations reflect the requirements designed for the Cold War. The primary regulation for RC mobilization is FR 500-3-3, which is Volume III of the FORSCOM Mobilization and Deployment Planning System (FORMDEPS). This regulation addresses the required tasks in each of the five phases of mobilization. FORSCOM Regulation 500-3-3 usefully serves as a checklist for the deploying commander.⁴ However, all deploying units and individual Soldiers must now complete several theater specific tasks not currently outlined in the FR 500-3-3. Tasks such as searching for improvised explosive devices were unheard of when FR 500-3-3 was written. To improve the current mobilization process we must first understand how FR 500-3-3 outlines the mobilization tasks.

These tasks are carried out in five phases: Phase I-Planning, Phase II-Alert, Phase III-Home Station, Phase IV-Mobilization Station, and Phase V-Port of Embarkation.⁵ FR 500-3-3 outlines the tasks that the unit must complete during each phase. DA must work closely with NGB and USAR to move as many of the tasks as possible from Phases III, IV, and V into earlier phases of mobilization.

The unit seeks to accomplish Phase I tasks prior to being alerted. Phase I tasks are generally incorporated into the day to day activities of the unit.⁶ Upon mobilization, a unit must immediately ensure they complete all Phase I tasks before starting the Phase

II tasks. FORSCOM Regulations direct that units will complete all previously required mobilization tasks before moving on to the next mobilization phase. Presently, mobilized units begin Phase II tasks immediately upon alert and complete Phase III tasks at the home station. The earlier units are alerted, the more time they have to complete Phase II and Phase III tasks. Because FORMDEPS is now nearly 10 years old, the unit must work closely with 1st Army to ensure the tasks they are completing are the tasks that are currently required for mobilization. Phase IV and Phase V tasks are now generally completed at the mobilization station or at the port of embarkation prior to deployment into theater. These Phase IV and Phase V tasks must be reviewed to identify as many of these tasks as possible that the mobilized unit can complete prior to mobilization. These tasks are generally specified on the theater mobilization requirements list that frequently changes and varies greatly from unit to unit. Today the lists of tasks a unit must accomplish before mobilizing are quite different and more extensive than those listed in FORMDEPS. The effort to coordinate when and where the unit will complete each task requires detailed communication among all entities from the unit through channels to the combatant commander.

FORSCOM Regulation 500-3-3 may still be called the Unit Commander's Handbook, but it no longer provides a reliable list of tasks to be completed to prepare for mobilization. Instead, the commander receives requirements from various sources and encounters changes throughout the mobilization process. Today the best guidance available to the commander is the 1st Army Commander's Training Tool, which lists tasks the units must train on pre- and post-mobilization; it is generally regarded as the mobilization authority, since FR 500-3-3 has last been updated.⁷

Pre-Mobilization Responsibilities. Combatant commanders and other active component (AC) commanders have no command authority over National Guard forces not serving on active duty.⁸ These forces are commanded by the governors of their respective states until their mobilization date.⁹ It is important to note, however that National Guard forces aligned with a combatant commander can receive their Training and Readiness Oversight (TRO) from that combatant commander.¹⁰ However, the TRO to the combatant commander does not divest the governors of their command authority until that particular unit is mobilized.¹¹

DA funds and validates pre-mobilization training requirements.¹² Currently, mobilized Soldiers receive full medical and dental coverage up to 90 days prior to mobilization. However, this is not adequate time for the unit to identify and “fix” all non-deployable Soldiers. DA should change regulations to extend the start of medical and dental health care to 365 days prior to a unit’s deployment so Soldiers have sufficient opportunity to become medically ready before mobilization. This will allow units to identify Soldiers that will not be deployable early in the pre-mobilization process, then the units can train the Soldiers they will deploy with. The more training that is moved to the pre-mobilization phases, the more imperative it is that the Soldiers trained are those able to deploy. This requirement will require statutory as well as regulatory changes.

FORSCOM specifies the required training tasks for alerted units so the units have a checklist prior to their deployment.¹³ FORSCOM develops the mobilization regulations for the entire reserve component. FORSCOM then communicates these requirements through 1st Army to ensure that the units are aware of the requirements and that the units complete all required tasks to standard prior to deployment.

1st Army provides training support to alerted units and provides post-mobilization training validations for the units at the mobilization station.¹⁴ Then it assigns a mobilization assistor to each deploying unit upon alert.¹⁵ 1st Army provides the trainers and resources for units at mobilization stations. Finally, 1st Army works closely with combatant commanders to ensure LADs are met and that the deploying unit has transportation into theater.

National Guard Bureau (NGB) serves as the “middleman” between DA and the states’ National Guard. It provides training policy guidance but exercises no command authority over the states’ National Guard. NGB ensures that training dollars for alerted units are properly allocated to meet the states’ mobilization training needs. The Director of the Army National Guard validates the training that the states’ Adjutants General certify.

The Adjutants General in each state certify all training completed in the pre-mobilization phase.¹⁶ The alerted units are responsible for meeting individual and collective training requirements in accord with the NGB Five-Year Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN)¹⁷ Training Strategy.¹⁸

The unit commander completes a training status report that tracks completed tasks following each training event. This training status report records the number of Soldiers that completed the training by individual task. The training status report provides the unit commander with a single document that identifies the unit’s training progress. After completing pre-mobilization training, the unit forwards this documentation to the 1st Army mobilization assistor and the Adjutant General when they complete pre-mobilization training and to their higher headquarters upon arrival at

the Mobilization Station (MS).¹⁹ Finally, the unit is responsible for requisitioning ammunition and other training requirements for pre-mobilization training.²⁰

Pre-Mobilization Training at Home Station. The more tasks units complete at home station during the pre-mobilization phase, the less training they will require after mobilization. This provides the combatant commander greater availability of the mobilized unit because a smaller portion of their deployment has been spent on post-mobilization.

In order to assist National Guard units with their home station training, NGB established Post-Mobilization Training and Assistance Elements (PTAEs) in each state and territory. These PTAEs contribute greatly to alerted units' pre-mobilization training. The PTAE headquarters consists of three individuals—a lieutenant colonel, a major and a master sergeant or sergeant major.²¹ In addition to the headquarters, the PTAE consists of training assistants who help alerted units to prepare for upcoming deployments with training support. Ideally these assistants are selected traditional Guardsmen recently returned from deployment and released from active duty. They are placed on Title 32 Active Duty Special Work (ADSW) status.²² The NGB currently plans to authorize one training assistant for every 60 Soldiers deployed.²³

The Observer Controller/Trainer Academy at Camp Shelby, MS, certifies these assistants prior to sending them out to train units. The Army National Guard is also planning to develop a National Guard Assistant Academy²⁴ which would provide the National Guard unit assistants that are currently provided by 1st Army in addition to those provided by PTAEs. National Guard assistants can provide better service and then 1st Army assistants because they live much closer to the units' home stations.²⁵

Every state and territory operates in a slightly different manner, but most states use their training assistants to train alerted units on warrior tasks and battle drills.²⁶ For instance, the North Dakota National Guard uses its PTAE to conduct all of the Combat Lifesaver Training, Combative Training, and “Train the Trainer” activities required for all units within the state.^{27 28} All pre-mobilization training must be carefully monitored and documented to ensure all training standards are met. PTAEs recognize this and have developed plans and procured equipment to ensure they are capable of meeting these challenges. So PTAEs give the states the ability to accomplish many tasks at HS that were previously conducted at MS.

NGB Current Goals. To comply with SECDEF guidance, NGB must plan pre-mobilization training to maximize BOG. To accomplish this, NGB needs cooperation from DA and FORSCOM on several points. First, NGB must begin pre-mobilization training, to include new equipment training, 730 days prior to the actual mobilization. This requires FORSCOM to identify the unit to be mobilized two years prior to the actual mobilization date.²⁹

Secondly, the unit should be alerted a minimum of 365 days prior to the mobilization. This alert provides many benefits to NGB, to the state and to the unit.³⁰ The alerted unit can then enact the “stop loss” policy, which stabilizes the unit’s personnel and authorizes funding for certain services, such as dental exams, to improve the unit’s overall readiness.³¹ Current regulations allow the unit to enact “stop loss” only 90 days prior to mobilization. This creates difficulties for the commander who is trying to validate those who will mobilize.³² The unit needs this full year to ensure they conduct the pre-mobilization training with Soldiers that will deploy. Without one year “stop loss”,

pre-mobilization training saves very little post-mobilization training time because training must be repeated for new Soldiers.

Finally, there must be extensive communication between, 1st Army, NGB, the state, and the unit to ensure there is careful coordination between pre-mobilization and post-mobilization training plans. These organizations must make a coordinated effort to ensure tasks that can be completed in the pre-mobilization phase are completed at home station; also, they must plan to quickly accomplish all post-mobilization tasks at the mobilization station. The SECDEF recently approved a test program to improve unit stabilization for one National Guard brigade and two small United States Army Reserve (USAR) units.³³ This effort to redefine the rules for RC mobilizations may be a step in the right direction.

NGB's goal for post-mobilization training time depends on the size of the unit mobilized. Effective October 1, 2008 NGB objectives are to reduce training times to 60 days for brigade combat teams, 45 days for battalion size units, and 30 days for company size units.³⁴ In addition to these goals, NGB also wants each unit to achieve at least 90% Duty Military Occupational Specialty Qualification (DMOSQ) by the time that unit is mobilized.³⁵

NGB's Current Training Strategy. The Army National Guard developed a training strategy that will support the Global War on Terrorism, provide for homeland defense, and supply the combatant commander mission capable Soldiers and units.³⁶ This strategy intends primarily to minimize post-mobilization training requirements and maximize the length of the actual deployment.³⁷ This NGB progress is a giant step forward, but has yet not provided maximum efficiency to the mobilization process.

This training strategy is conducted in a five-year model that supports ARFORGEN requirements. A returning unit spends the first two years in the model reconstituting (year one) and training (year two). These two years should ideally be three to four years in advance of the next mobilization for the unit. The next two years of the training model are spent training on tasks for the deployment. In the ARFORGEN model, the unit is notified that they have been selected to deploy as they start year three of the cycle, then they are formally alerted at the start of year four of the cycle. During the fifth year of the model, the unit is deployed.³⁸

Specifically, during the first year of this model, the unit focuses on training individuals and squads to accomplish sub-unit proficiency, along with reconstituting personnel and equipment. The unit should come into the second year of the cycle proficient at the squad level. The unit continues to build on this proficiency by focusing on platoon maneuver during the second year of the cycle. Then they can begin the third year of the cycle already proficient at platoon level tasks.³⁹ The unit should receive their notification of sourcing for their upcoming deployment at the beginning of this year. This notification authorizes the unit seven additional drill periods and seven extra days of annual training to prepare for the upcoming deployment. The unit uses these extra training periods to validate performance on many tasks that were formerly done post mobilization. The Adjutant General assesses the unit at the end of this year to determine what additional resources are required to ensure the unit will be ready for mobilization. If the Adjutant General determines that resourcing alone will not prepare the unit for mobilization, another unit may be selected for the mobilization.⁴⁰ If this is the case, the Adjutant General must immediately communicate this information to NGB,

FORSCOM, and 1st Army so another unit can be alerted, or so additional resources can be sent to the replacement unit to ensure they are deployable prior to the original unit's LAD.

The unit begins the fourth year of the cycle at company level proficiency. They should be officially alerted for mobilization at the start of this fourth year. The focus of this training year should be on battalion level maneuver. The unit is authorized seven drill periods, seven extra days of annual training and 19 additional training days (i.e. ADSW) above the normal yearly authorization.⁴¹ These additional days of training also ensure the unit has an opportunity to re-train on any tasks that they feel uncomfortable with from the previous years' training plan. The unit finalizes post-mobilization training plans and synchronizes these plans with 1st Army/FORSCOM about four months prior to mobilization.⁴² Fully implemented, the ARFORGEN model will provide alerted units the pre-mobilization training time required to shorten their post-mobilization training.

The unit should expect to mobilize in the fifth year of the cycle. This year consists of post-mobilization time, the deployment itself, and finally the demobilization process. With a Brigade Combat Team (BCT), the year may break down as follows: 60 days for post-mobilization training, 21 days of travel and relief in place/transfer of authority (RIP/TOA)⁴³, 263 days of duty on the ground, 14 days of RIP/TOA for the replacement unit and seven days for travel and demobilization.⁴⁴ Not all units will mobilize this fifth year if they are not needed for a mission by the combatant commander, but they will retain a high state of readiness if not deployed.⁴⁵

NGB, in cooperation, with the USAR and 1st Army has identified categories of mobilization training requirements for different types of units. They quickly realized that

not all units require the same pre-mobilization and post-mobilization training.

Accordingly, they have divided units into four categories based on the units' mission in theater.

The first category of units is those whose mission is at the base camp. These units will spend their entire deployment on a base camp, and do not leave the confines of the base camp. A finance unit would be a good example. These units are probably the easiest or quickest units to train because many of the tasks required for other units are not required for these units. Base camp units should accomplish their post-mobilization training time in 30 days or less.⁴⁶ These units will also train using the ARFORGEN model, but they will have quite different tasks because their collective proficiency does not require most of the combat skills that a BCT requires.

The second type of unit spends most of their time on a base camp, but the nature of their mission requires them to travel off the base camp occasionally. A medium truck company would be a good example. These units should be able to accomplish their post-mobilization in 45 days or less.⁴⁷

The third classification of units is those who conduct their mission off of the base camp. Units conducting security duty would be good examples of this type of unit. These units should be able to conduct their post-mobilization training in 60 days or less.⁴⁸ These units generally train on all tasks assigned to the first two categories; additionally they will train on specific combat related tasks.

Maneuver units like BCTs and other combat arms units make up the last category. These units actually own an area of operations. They have the most training

requirements and require up to 75 days of post-mobilization training under the latest models.⁴⁹

All of these units should synchronize their pre-mobilization training plans with 1st Army and the combatant commander and then ensure they have met all of post-mobilization training requirements for their units. The initial goal remains: reduce the post-mobilization time to provide the best possible product for the combatant commander. Secondly, the model must synchronize the pre-mobilization and post-mobilization training efforts to ensure that all training requirements are met without duplicating any of the training.⁵⁰ The strategy calls for training individuals first and then building up collectively at the squad, platoon, company, and finally battalion levels. Each year the collective training should build on the previous year's training to produce a fully trained unit before LAD.

Benefits to the Combatant Commander. Each time a unit is replaced by another unit in theater, the new unit spends a portion of their deployment learning their tasks and procedures, area of operations, their enemy, their adjacent units, and the local citizenry. Units continue to improve on this knowledge throughout their deployment. The longer they stay in one area and on one mission, the better they get.⁵¹

Particularly in Arab countries, trust is built on relationships. It takes time to foster these relationships. This may be true in any part of the world, but it cannot be overstated for Arab cultures. The local Iraqis or Afghans will trust Soldiers to a greater degree if they are able to develop a relationship with these Soldiers.

It stands to reason then that fewer rotations and longer BOG will improve the units' ability to do their jobs and improve their relationship with the local citizenry. The

more training we can provide in the pre-mobilization phase, the longer the deployed units will be able to support the combatant commander. This will also bring the rotations for RC units more closely in line with those of their active duty counterparts.

Cost Savings. The longer a mobilized unit is in theater, the more cost-effective the deployment becomes. A unit requiring four months to complete all post-mobilization training will probably provide only seven months of service on a 12 month deployment because of transportation time and time required to perform RIP/TOA. A unit that can complete their post-mobilization training in one month can provide 10 months of service in theater on a 12 month deployment. This added service time not only results in vast cost savings, but reduces the number of units needed over an extended conflict. Much of these savings are gained from reducing transportation costs for moving fewer units in and out of the theater. This example also provides almost 50% more BOG time, which reduces the number of units needed in the Army inventory to provide the “dwell” time⁵² as directed in the ARFORGEN model. The Army gains additional savings when it reduces the transportation requirements by sending fewer units

Additionally, the Army spends a great deal of money purchasing rapid fielding initiative (RFI)⁵³ equipment for a deploying unit. Again, when fewer units are sent, the cost to the Army significantly decreases. Finally there are many more fixed costs that a unit incurs each time it deploys. These costs are generally fixed, regardless of the length of the deployment.

Obstacles to Overcome. Some critics will contend that the post-mobilization process cannot be shortened. Clearly it will not be easy to increase the BOG for deploying units.

First, training resources must be made available within a reasonable distance from any unit alerted for mobilization. Not all states may need to have a training areas to accomplish any pre-mobilization training task, but adequate training area must be available within one day's driving distance of all units in order to preserve training days for the deploying unit. Currently not all mobilization stations have all the required training facilities, so this is no small issue. Resourcing each state for adequate training areas will be expensive, but will provide improved access to training for all units, not just for the National Guard. These training areas should have modern ranges and areas to conduct live fire exercises and lanes training.

Second, all components must work to build a greater level of cooperation. While the current cooperation between components is probably unprecedented, roles and relationships must be completely redefined to achieve maximum efficiency. In the past there have been occasions when evaluators did not accept all training the mobilized units had completed unless they had physically observed that training. All entities must be able to validate required tasks that are performed to eliminate any repetitious training. Again, 1st Army and their mobilization stations have made great strides in this area. Continued coordination between NGB, USAR, and 1st Army will streamline the mobilization process even further. Observer/controllers or evaluator assets should be shared freely among active duty installations, the National Guard, and the Army Reserve. The ensuing ability to surge assets will create greater efficiencies and provide better training to mobilized units.

Third, planning and forecasting at all levels must improve. The Army must forecast out 730 days which units will mobilize for any conflict.⁵⁴ It is better to alert a unit

and then decide not to deploy the unit than it is to tell a unit to deploy inside of that 730 day window. This 730-day window is the key to providing the unit the resources of time and money that it needs to prepare at home station. If FORSCOM alerts a unit for deployment but does not deploy the unit, they have spent some training dollars on a unit that is not deploying immediately. But in return, they have gained a highly trained unit. This unit is immediately ready to deploy to any contingency.

Fourth, funding regulations currently make it hard to get the resources to a deploying unit early enough. A unit deploying in 2010 should begin receiving additional training dollars and equipment in 2008. The unit has increased costs over three different fiscal years for the additional training time required and for fully equipping for the deployment.

Recommendations

First, FORSCOM, in cooperation with NGB and the USAR, must re-write FR 500-3-3 to accurately reflect the current combatant commanders' requirements. The reserve component commander should be able to refer to a single reliable document to identify all of his mobilization requirements, rather than the current ad hoc approach.

Second, all components should review all of their policies and procedures to identify how they can create efficiencies to better forecast the units that will deploy. Further, they must adequately fund those units early enough in the ARFORGEN cycle to allow the units to train on all required mobilization tasks. This will require not just policy changes but changes in funding regulations.

Third, all components should have full authorization to validate any training the mobilized unit completes in pre-mobilization or post-mobilization training. All RC

component training should focus on the deployment criteria, rather than the units' Mission Essential Task List (METL), for the 36 months preceding their deployment.⁵⁵

Fourth, the Army must reduce the post mobilization time for RC BCTs to 60 days or less. Many of the current requirements can be reduced or eliminated because these units have already deployed and are better trained than they were for their first deployment. All agencies and components must work together to move a significant number of tasks currently specified in Phases III, IV and V to Phases I and II for all RC units, not just the BCTs. Again, this requires early forecasting and resourcing for units projected for deployments.

Fifth, the Army must request legislative changes to enable the reserve components to provide comprehensive medical and dental coverage a full 12 months prior to deployment. This coverage will enable RC Soldiers to become medically and dentally qualified for deployment. It will not only provide increased readiness for the unit but will also identify those Soldiers unfit for mobilization early in the process. Early identification of non-deployable Soldiers allows the unit to find replacements that still have time to complete their mobilization training.

Sixth, Department of Defense (DoD) must fund adequate regional training centers for RC units capable of facilitating all mobilization tasks, such as live fire ranges. There must be enough training centers so that all units can utilize these centers on a normal drill weekend without spending the majority of the weekend travelling to and from the centers. These centers will not merely improve training for mobilized units, but for all units in the geographical area.

Seventh, the Army, USAR, and NGB must improve cooperation for providing observer/controllers for mobilized units. Observer/controllers from one component must be available to provide support to other components, states and commands. This open sharing of assets will improve efficiency by eliminating redundancy. Again, regulatory changes for moving funds from one component to another for this support will facilitate this change.

Conclusion

It is almost universally accepted that reducing reserve units' post-mobilization time is imperative, but institutional changes are needed to make this happen. Units must change the way they train by focusing exclusively on their deployment requirements 36 months prior to their projected deployment date. States must improve their pre-mobilization training and readiness oversight. NGB must communicate with the states to ensure availability of adequate and timely resources and clearly communicate their needs to DA. DA must solidify the ARFORGEN model and provide better predictability for units to ensure the right units are conducting pre-mobilization training at the right time.

While everyone agrees that reducing post-mobilization time is a good thing and would say that they are willing to implement the suggested changes, it is quite another thing to actually restructure budgets, change validation processes, and give up some control over the way the Army currently conducts post-mobilization training. All entities must agree that units can train on all required tasks in the pre-mobilization phase and then identify which of those tasks cannot be accomplished on a case-by-case basis. Then they must put all options on the table and give the unit commander the ability to

develop his training plan from start to finish. These changes will require cultural changes, such as allowing the unit commander to forgo some required training that he feels his unit is already trained on, to go above and beyond the steps taken so far. We should strive to reduce post mobilization training time even further by moving even more training into the pre-mobilization phase.

Reducing post-mobilization training time will not be easy. Some mobilization stations are not currently resourced to provide adequate training areas and ranges for all required tasks. We must resource every state with funds for additional training to accomplish these tasks and resource all regional training facilities with required training sites. Again, these training areas will serve not only to the alerted units, but all other units in that area.

Contingencies will arise that require units unavailable according to the ARFORGEN model so plans and policies must be in place to ensure a unit called up on a short notice can still maximize their BOG.

It is important to note that most units called up now have previous mobilization experience. Leaders at all levels should consider this fact and determine which pre-mobilization and post-mobilization tasks they can abbreviate or eliminate from the task lists for these previously deployed units.

The cost savings of reducing post-mobilization time outweigh any costs incurred during the pre-mobilization training.⁵⁶ The most compelling reason to reduce the post mobilization training time is the benefit to the Combatant Commander who can acquire units that are in theater longer per deployment; this improves the stability of his forces. Also, there are significant cost savings for activating fewer reserve units to execute a

war over the same extended period. Not only will these longer rotations save money, they will increase overall performance of the units that do deploy. Reduced post-mobilization time reduces stress on Soldiers and their Families. Reduction of post-mobilization training time from three months for a Brigade Combat Team (BCT) to two months, which is more ambitious than NGB's current goal, would reduce the number of BCTs required by 12 percent over an extended operation. This is a much more practical alternative than increasing our BCTs by 12 percent. A unit that conducts 90 days of post-mobilization actually serves only 230 BOG because of the post-mobilization training time, travel to theater, RIP/TOA at the beginning of the deployment, RIP TOA at the end of the deployment, travel from theater, and demobilization time into account. The same unit will be able to serve 260 days BOG with post mobilization training cut down to 60 days. A conflict mission that lasts five years requires eight BCTs if the BCTs each require 90 days of post-mobilization training. The same mission will require only seven BCTs if the post-mobilization time can be cut to 60 days for each BCT. At a time where budgets appear to be tightening and future growth of our Army appears unlikely, reducing post-mobilization time may not be just the best option, it may be the only option.

Endnotes

¹ U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, "Utilization of the Total Force," memorandum for Secretaries of the Military Departments Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Under Secretaries of Defense, Washington, DC, January 19, 2007.

² Boots on the Ground or BOG refers to the length of time that an activated unit actually serves in theater during their deployment. If a unit is activated for 12 months, but spends two of those 12 months training at mobilization station prior to deploying, they would serve the remaining 10 months in theater or with their "Boots on the Ground".

³ Latest Arrival Date (LAD) is the last day that the mobilized unit can arrive in theater. For example, if a unit is mobilized and required by the theater commander on 1 September 2008, the unit must be trained and transported to arrive in theater on or before that date. Units typically arrive a few days prior to their LAD. A unit that can not arrive on or before their arrival date must work closely with 1st Army and the Combatant Commander to clearly communicate their date of arrival in theater and their reason for missing their LAD. The unit they are replacing may have to stay longer than they were scheduled to because of this delay.

⁴ FR 500-3-3 is still the applicable regulation for mobilization, but has been effectively superseded by other task lists and 1st Army directives. FORSCOM will soon revise FR 500-3-3.

⁵ U.S. Army Forces Command, Ft. McPherson, GA: FORSCOM Regulation 500-3-3 *"Volume III Reserve Component Unit Commanders Handbook,"* 1999.

⁶ Tasks in Phase I are all identified in FORSCOM Regulation 500-3-3 and consist of tasks that the unit accomplished in day to day routine like providing administrative or logistical support to the unit members. Any Phase I tasks not already completed by the unit upon mobilization are immediately completed upon alert.

⁷ LTC William Abernathy, Tennessee Army National Guard, HQDA G3/5/7, Telephone interview by author, October 1, 2008.

⁸ National Guard Soldiers are under the control of the Adjutant General and the Governor of their state. They perform their duties for unit assemblies, annual training and response to natural disasters in title 32 status. When they are activated to serve in combat they fall under the command and control of their combatant commander until released from active duty. They serve in a Title 10 or active duty status while deployed.

⁹ LTC Michael H. Noyes, National Guard Bureau, Judge Advocates, "Subject: Training and Readiness Oversight," Memorandum for COL Kadavy, Arlington, VA, February 23, 2007.

¹⁰ Combatant commanders can provide Training Readiness Oversight (TRO) to units projected to mobilize into their geographic commands, but do not have actual command authority over those units until the unit is mobilized. Typically a cooperative arrangement between the combatant command and the peace time headquarters is made where the unit takes training guidance from both commands, but in case of conflict takes guidance from the peace time command.

¹¹ Noyes, 23 February 23, 2007.

¹² COL Robert A. Moore, Chief, Training Division, National Guard Bureau (NGB), "Army National Guard Pre-Mobilization Conference Briefing," Dallas, TX, Slide 9.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Details of supporting/supported relationships are provided in Paragraph 3. LTC James D. Thurman, Deputy Chief of Staff, G3/5/7, "Subject: HQDA EXORD 150-08, Deployment Expeditionary Force Pre and Post Mobilization Training Strategy," Execution Order for US Department of the Army, Washington, DC, February 29, 2008.

¹⁶ DA EXORD 150-08 only requires that the first General Officer in the units' chain of command approves the RC Commander's certification. This is how the USAR certifies their units' RC Commander's certification.

¹⁷ Army Force Generation Model or ARFORGEN is a model that systematically rotates units into theater after they have had ample time to reconstitute and train for the deployment. Current ARFORGEN calls for reserve component units to deploy every five years.

¹⁸ Moore, "Army National Guard Pre-Mobilization Conference," Slide 9.

¹⁹ COL Robert A. Moore, "Subject: Pre-Mob Training Documentation Guidance," Memorandum for the Adjutants General, Arlington, VA, August 13, 2008.

²⁰ LTC Phil Torrence, NGB, "Army National Guard Pre-Mobilization Training Certification and Validation" briefing, Slide 12.

²¹ LTC Owen Speidel, PTAE Commander, North Dakota National Guard, Telephone interview by author, September 2, 2008.

²² Title 32 ADSW is a form of active duty where the Soldier still falls under the control of the Adjutant General and Governor of the state to which he belongs. The Soldier receives all the pay, allowance and benefits that a regular active duty Soldier would receive. ADSW stands for Active Duty Special Work. This acronym is currently being replaced by ADOS or Active Duty Operational Support.

²³ COL Robert A. Moore, "Army National Guard Pre-Mobilization Conference," Slide 8.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Having unit assistors in each state provides better coverage to the units because historically unit assistors from 1st Army commonly have conflicts with more than one of their units training on the same days. Travel accounts go much farther if the assistor is driving down the road one hour to observe training than if the assistor needs to fly across the country to observe training. 1st Army is currently required to support units with training assistors, but lack of personnel and travel funds have prevented them from attending all unit pre-mobilization training.

²⁶ Speidel Interview, September 2, 2008.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Warrior tasks and battle drills are tasks that individual Soldiers and units must be able to perform respectively before they deploy into theater. These lists were developed by combatant commanders after FR 500-3-3 was written. Units now train on these tasks in addition to METL tasks before they deploy.

²⁹ FORSCOM provides the majority of forces. PACOM and USAREUR are also force providers. Requiring notification 730 days prior to mobilization is probably the most difficult piece of reducing post mobilization training requirements, but is critical to provide the units time to fully train. To date, force requirements for brigade and battalion size elements have been relatively accurate and somewhat easier to predict. Combatant commanders have had more difficulty forecasting small units and low density MOSs 730 days out. This forecast will never

achieve 100% accuracy, but should remain the combatant commander goal to achieve maximum training efficiency. It is unrealistic to project all force requirements. For instance, nobody could foresee the requirements on 10 SEP 01, but to clearly improvements can be made in this area. The Army must plan and project as well as possible to provide early notification to as many of the required units as possible.

³⁰ The alert helps the unit by authorizing “stop loss”. This allows the unit to identify personnel shortfalls for mobilization. The state will attempt to fill all shortages identified by the unit and will “pass back” any vacancies that it can’t fill to the NGB. The sooner NGB gets this “pass back” from the states, the sooner they can go to other states for assistance in filling positions that the original state could not fill.

³¹ Currently, units first receive a notification for training that tells the unit and their chain of command that they are being considered for mobilization. This gives the unit time to transfer Soldiers into the unit to bring the unit up to acceptable personnel standards and to identify Soldiers that may not be deployable. The unit receives official notification that they will be mobilized when they receive their alert order. This order allows them additional training dollars and benefits to the alerted unit’s Soldiers.

³² Abernathy Interview, 1 October 2008.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Moore, “Army National Guard Pre-Mobilization Conference, Slide 10.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ COL Robert A Moore, Chief, Training Division, NGB, “ARNG Training Strategy ‘Setting the Conditions’ for the Operational Force,” briefing, July 28, 2008, Slide 2.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid., Slide 5.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ A reserve component unit is normally authorized 48 drill assemblies and 15 days of annual training in one training year. An alert unit is authorized 55 drill assemblies and 22 days of annual training the year prior to mobilization. Additionally, the unit is authorized 19 days of ADSW to prepare for the upcoming mobilization.

⁴² Moore, “ARNG Training Strategy ‘Setting the Conditions’ for the Operational Force,” Briefing, Slide 5.

⁴³ Relief in place/Transfer of authority is the process incoming and outgoing units use to replace each other. The incoming unit comes in to “Relief” the unit that is completing their deployment. The outgoing unit does their best to ensure they pass all relevant information to the incoming unit so the new unit can be successful. Transfer of Authority takes place when the

incoming unit is satisfied that they are ready to assume responsibility for the mission, thereby releasing the outgoing unit of their responsibility for the mission.

⁴⁴ Moore, "ARNG Training Strategy 'Setting the Conditions' for the Operational Force," Briefing, Slide 5.

⁴⁵ Army Training and Leader Development Strategy Draft is out for review, but not yet published. This guidance adds detail to what the CSA expects throughout the ARFORGEN model.

⁴⁶ Moore, "ARNG Training Strategy 'Setting the Conditions' for the Operational Force," Briefing, Slide 9.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid., Slide 6.

⁵¹ LTC Charles Tilton, Tennessee Army National Guard, Interview by author, Carlisle, PA, November 3, 2008.

⁵² Dwell time is defined as the time a unit can stay at their home station between deployments. If the unit deploys and then is home for four years before it deploys again, the unit has four years of dwell time.

⁵³ Rapid Fielding Initiative equipment is equipment issued to a deploying unit that they may not otherwise be issued. Typical items may include sunglasses, dust goggles, and special uniforms.

⁵⁴ The army will never be able to forecast exact troop requirements two years into the future due to changing tactical situations. It should be able to fairly accurately forecast requirements for stable operations like Bosnia, Kosovo and with increasing accuracy for Iraq and Afghanistan.

⁵⁵ This policy is in accordance with recent Chief of Staff of the Army memorandum that directs reserve component units to train on mobilization requirements 36 months immediately prior to their deployment and to train on their Mission Essential Task List if they are not forecasted for deployment in the next 36 months.

⁵⁶ The cost of developing and resourcing regional training areas can't be accurately forecasted until the location and scope of each training area is identified.