

LIFE-CYCLE MANAGEMENT OF THE ACTIVE RESERVE FIELD GRADE OFFICER POPULATION

BY

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USAWC CLASS OF 2010

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REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

Form Approved
OMB No. 0704-0188

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing this collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden to Department of Defense, Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports (0704-0188), 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to any penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number. **PLEASE DO NOT RETURN YOUR FORM TO THE ABOVE ADDRESS.**

1. REPORT DATE (DD-MM-YYYY) 26-02-2010		2. REPORT TYPE Strategy Research Project		3. DATES COVERED (From - To)	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE Life-Cycle Management of the Active Reserve Field Grade Officer Population				5a. CONTRACT NUMBER	
				5b. GRANT NUMBER	
				5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER	
6. AUTHOR(S) Lieutenant Colonel Mark A. Rushing				5d. PROJECT NUMBER	
				5e. TASK NUMBER	
				5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Colonel F. Scott Main Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute				8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) U.S. Army War College 122 Forbes Avenue Carlisle, PA 17013				10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)	
				11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
12. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Distribution A: Unlimited					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES					
14. ABSTRACT The intent of this Strategic Research Project (SRP) is to answer the strategic question, "As the Army Reserve transforms from a strategic force to an operational force will the life-cycle management of the Active Guard Reserve (AGR) field grade officer population meet the emerging challenges of senior leadership in an operational Army Reserve"? This SRP will examine the beginnings of the AGR force and outline the purpose of the AGR program when the Army Reserve was a strategic force. It will define four competencies' that are needed for a Colonel in an operational Army Reserve environment. The immediate question is whether these competencies exist in the current population of Colonel's in the strategic Army Reserve or do existing requirements not support the training of Colonels on these four competencies. I will address this question with research from Human Research Command (HRC) and Office Chief Army Reserve (OCAR) on the life-cycle management and whether these new emerging operational requirements of the current Colonel AGR population will meet the four operational competencies needed of the operational Army Reserve.					
15. SUBJECT TERMS Professional Military Education (PME), Troop Program Unit (TPU), Active Federal Service (AFS), Active Guard Reserve (AGR), Full-Time Support (FTS), Senior Leader Development Office (SLDO), Human Resource Command (HRC)					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	18. NUMBER OF PAGES	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT UNCLASSIFIED	b. ABSTRACT UNCLASSIFIED	c. THIS PAGE UNCLASSIFIED			19b. TELEPHONE NUMBER (include area code)
			UNLIMITED	28	

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

**LIFE-CYCLE MANAGEMENT OF THE ACTIVE RESERVE FIELD GRADE OFFICER
POPULATION**

by

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ABSTRACT

AUTHOR: Lieutenant Colonel Mark A. Rushing

TITLE: Life-Cycle Management of the Active Reserve Field Grade Officer Population

FORMAT: Strategy Research Project

DATE: 26 February 2010 **WORD COUNT:** 5,862 **PAGES:** 28

KEY TERMS: Professional Military Education (PME), Troop Program Unit (TPU), Active Federal Service (AFS), Active Guard Reserve (AGR), Full-Time Support (FTS), Senior Leader Development Office (SLDO), Human Resource Command (HRC)

CLASSIFICATION: Unclassified

The intent of this Strategic Research Project (SRP) is to answer the strategic question, “As the Army Reserve transforms from a strategic force to an operational force will the life-cycle management of the Active Guard Reserve (AGR) field grade officer population meet the emerging challenges of senior leadership in an operational Army Reserve”? This SRP will examine the beginnings of the AGR force and outline the purpose of the AGR program when the Army Reserve was a strategic force. It will define four competencies’ that are needed for a Colonel in an operational Army Reserve environment. The immediate question is whether these competencies exist in the current population of Colonel’s in the strategic Army Reserve or do existing requirements not support the training of Colonels on these four competencies. I will address this question with research from Human Research Command (HRC) and Office Chief Army Reserve (OCAR) on the life-cycle management and whether these new emerging operational requirements of the current Colonel AGR population will meet the four operational competencies needed of the operational Army Reserve.

LIFE-CYCLE MANAGEMENT OF THE ACTIVE RESERVE FIELD GRADE OFFICER POPULATION

The old Army Reserve was a strategic force and we advertised it as such, one weekend a month, two weeks in the summertime. That all changed after 9/11 – we're now an operational force. Our nation is involved with global war on terrorism on an enduring basis. To support, we have to be an operational force. We have to be much more active and ready on a regular basis in supporting the war.

—LTG Jack C. Stultz

Army Reserve Transformation

The Army Reserve (AR) during the first 100 years has had a rich tradition as a strategic force and responded to the nations call with much sacrifice of its citizen warriors. The Army Reserve strategic force was designed primarily for mobilization in “Cold War–era scenarios in which the force was to augment and backfill the active forces (after long post-mobilization training periods) only in the event of a major conflict.”¹ Today, the traditional role of the Army Reserve is changing and transforming to an operational force that is permanent and has a sustainable system of rotation for all short and long term operations.² With these mission changes come over arching concerns for the competency of senior Active Guard Reserve (AGR) leadership at the Colonel level. The traditional reservist Troop Program Unit (TPU) senior leaders are meeting the challenge through leadership life-cycle management of traditional leadership and education roles, but as the Army Reserve transforms, is the AGR officer developing the competencies needed to become an effective senior leader in an operational reserve? The strategic vision for the Full Time Support (FTS) 2017, which includes the AGR force, is simply stated, “*A dynamic, responsive and flexible program that optimizes support to an ARFORGEN-enabled Operational Reserve while promoting*

predictability and lifecycle management for FTS personnel.”³ Developing of essential competencies in today’s AGR senior leadership in the operational reserve is critical to ensure that the total Army Reserve force meets the call of this great nation.

First 100 Years of the Strategic Army Reserve

The United States Army Reserve has had a long and distinguished history with over a century of service to this country. While most people today take the existence of the Army Reserve and its mission for granted, the earliest version was an entirely different force in mission and purpose. The Army Reserve grew out of the creation of the Medical Reserve Corps on April 23rd, 1908 and has since evolved from 360 individual medical specialists to an end strength of over 200,000 soldiers, primarily in combat support, although it has soldiers in both combat service and combat units. Since 1908, the Army Reserve has had a presence in every major conflict that the United States has faced. In addition, Army Reserve Soldiers have responded to peacetime missions such as disaster relief after devastating hurricanes.⁴

The US Army Reserve was first mobilized in 1916 in response to the Mexican Revolution. Despite the fact that war with Mexico was avoided, this first mobilization provided a good rehearsal of the Army Reserve for the mobilization of over 170,000 personnel from both the existing Army Reserve and personnel who were not previously soldiers following the year for WWI. In the years between WWI and WWII, training in the Army Reserve was neglected. Due to the poor economic condition of the country from the Great Depression and inadequate Congressional resourcing of the Army adequately, only 14 percent of Army Reserve officers received annual training in these intervening years creating a readiness concern.⁵ “The number of Army Reservists who

received two weeks of yearly training rose from a low of 14 percent in 1934 to over 30 percent as mobilization neared in 1940”⁶and the start of WWII.

WWII provided an opportunity for the rebuilding of the Army Reserve with the availability of more resources. Over 200,000 Army Reserve Soldiers actively served in the US Army, with Army Reserve officers making up 25 percent of all US Army officers during the war. This high percentage was due to reservists accepting reserve commissions as officers. Notable Army Reserve officers who achieved general officer rank during WWII include Lt. Gen. James H. Doolittle, Maj. Gen. William J. Donovan, and Theodore Roosevelt, Jr.⁷

Only five years after the conclusion of World War II, the United States entered the three-year long Korean War on June 25, 1950. “The number of Army Reserve members who served in Korea has not been determined, though 240,500 Army reservists were called to active duty”⁸ during the conflict, with more than 200,000 Army reservists fighting after the first full year of the Korean War.⁹ The size of the Army Reserve at the end of the Korean War had risen to a total of 945,603 men and women.¹⁰

In contrast to the large role that the Army Reserve played during the Korean War, less than 5,000 Army Reserve soldiers were called into action during the Vietnam War. While the use of the Army Reserve was considered during the Johnson administration, the President decided not to have a large call up.¹¹ The underlying reason was political and the administration would have had to ask for Congressional authorization to fight the Vietnam War with the use of Army Reserve forces.¹²

With the collapse of the Soviet Union in the late 1980’s and the subsequent expansion of the United States’ role as a world superpower, the Army Reserve provided

support during peacekeeping operations, conflicts, and relief efforts of the United States during the late 1980's and early 1990's.¹³ The largest deployment of the Army Reserve was in 1991 during the Gulf War in Operation Desert Shield and Operation Desert Storm when 84,000 soldiers were activated and called up for active duty.¹⁴

Beginning in 1995, the Army Reserve participated in peacekeeping efforts in Kosovo. Army Reserve soldiers also provided humanitarian support for various European countries and directly assisted in refugee support in the United States. Army Reserve soldiers from logistical units took a huge leadership role in the Operation Provide Refuge Joint Task Force, which provided aid to 4,000 Albanians in 1999.¹⁵

The early 21st Century marked a dramatic shift in the mission of the US military as anti-terrorism became a priority due to the events of September 11th, 2001. In immediate response to the attacks on New York City, Pennsylvania, and the Pentagon, the Army Reserve provided Military Police (MP) and Grave Registration units from the 65th RRC for numerous rescue and recovery operations.¹⁶

In response to September 11th, 2001 the United States attacked and overthrew the Taliban government in Afghanistan. The Army Reserve made a significant contribution to the quick success of the US military in removing the Taliban regime by supporting the mission through public affairs, engineering, and medical support. In addition, Army Reserve civil affairs soldiers worked directly with the Afghan people to assist in the recovery after the defeat of the Taliban.¹⁷

Operation Iraqi Freedom which began on March 20th, 2003 created further expansion of the U.S. military operations calling for additional Army Reserve forces. Army Reserve and U.S. regular Army soldiers fought alongside coalition forces to end

Saddam Hussein's regime and remained during the struggle that ensued as guerrilla forces and insurgents fought to further destabilize the country. At the peak of operations in late 2003 and early 2004, over 70,000 reservists had been mobilized for Operation Iraqi Freedom.¹⁸

In August 2005, Hurricane Katrina struck the United States, causing widespread devastation and damage to New Orleans and the Gulf Coast. Army Reserve units from Mississippi, New Orleans, and Alabama consisting of over 200 soldiers overcame logistic shortfalls in the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) supply pipeline to provide relief to the people affected by the storm.¹⁹

As of early 2005, over 130,000 Army Reserve soldiers had been called to duty as a result of the September 11th attacks and the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. As of 2008, 130 Army Reserve members had died and over 1200 had been wounded in action while serving the United States in the Global War on Terror.²⁰

The United States Army Reserve has proudly served the people of the United States during seven major wars and through numerous other conflicts and missions. The Army Reserve, through its citizen-warriors, has been of vital importance to the active army. The US Army Reserve, with over 205,000 soldiers, makes up a large percentage of the 1,111,600 total US Army soldiers, with many specialized units existing almost exclusively in the Army Reserve, for example Civil Affairs units. With the transformation of the United States Army, the role of the Army Reserve and its AGR's will continue to evolve and change in order to answer the nation's call for service in an effective and timely manner.²¹

Establishment of the Active Guard Reserve

When the Vietnam War ended, the Department of the Army made a decision to reduce the active Army and move combat support and service responsibilities to the Army Reserve. The Department of Defense (DOD) initiated plans that would review the shift in responsibilities to the Army Reserve and assess the effect this would have on the United States Army's ability to perform its primary mission of combat arms. "During this same period that dependence on reserve forces increased, the Secretary of Defense implemented the Total Force Policy (1973) designed to formalize the augmentation of the Active forces by the Guard and Army Reserve in the event of mobilization."²² Four specific areas of concern were identified by Congress: reserve component (RC) recruiting, classification of military personnel, readiness levels of reserve units, and conflicts in the technician programs resulting from unionization.²³ Out of the four issues discussed, the issue that drew the most concern was the technician personnel issue. A need was identified in the Army Reserve for this new type of force that was full-time. Technicians would be the day-to-day full-time staff who would support the mission of the reserve and this was the beginning of the Active Guard Reserve (AGR) force.²⁴

During the 1970s, the United States Army was in transition from the draftee force and volunteer force to an all-volunteer force. The dilemma was how to shape the newly created all-volunteer total force. Congress decided to task the Defense Manpower Commission to analyze what the total force needed to look like, which included all components of the Army. The commission was organized in 1974 and submitted their report two years later. On April 19th, 1976, the commission recommended an increase of full-time support and the conversion of technicians to full-time status.²⁵ Forces

Command (FORSCOM) conducted a study of the Army Reserve Technician (ART) program and found that there was a shortage of military technicians at both the Battalion and Company levels. The study also concluded that there was a need for additional unit and supply technicians to support Army Reserve units. During this same time period, the Department of the Army was looking at full-time requirements thru a program called the Stroud Study. The focus of the Stroud study was on the technicians program and it concluded that the Army Reserve needed to increase full-time support in order to maintain readiness.²⁶ There were many studies conducted on Army Reserve full-time support and the conclusions were relatively consistent that there was a need to increase Army Reserve full-time support.²⁷

Congress, after all the studies on Army Reserve full-time support and its impact on readiness, increased the Army's manpower authorizations. This translated to 2000 Army Reserve recruiters with a new personnel status. In 1980, the Department of Defense Authorization Act used the phrase "Active Guard/Reserve" and in 1982, AGR was "formalized in regulation with the publication of AR 135-2."²⁸ This was the beginning of the new full-time AGR force supporting Army Reserve units worldwide.²⁹

Competencies Required of Operational AGR Senior Leaders

The Army Reserve is transforming from a strategic force to an operational force and with this transformation comes new challenges for the Active Guard Reserve (AGR) as it relates to developing leaders thru the Colonel level.

The four most important competencies required of leaders that will be discussed here are technical/preparing self, vision, communication and leading others. These competencies will be analyzed and defined as to why they are needed thru the Colonel level and what the Army Reserve needs to do to ensure these competencies are

developed in future AGR leaders. As a base for this discussion here is a brief background of the AGR program that focuses on strategic issues and some of its cultural attributes.

The primary purpose of the AGRs in the Reserve was to provide the day-to-day support for a unit and to ensure the soldiers and Troop Personnel Units (TPUs) were administratively supported. The strategic Army Reserve is described by Alan Schrews in his thesis abstract "*Optimizing active guard reserve enlisted manpower as follows*", "The principal mission of the United States Army Reserve (USAR) is to maintain properly trained and equipped units available to promptly mobilize for war, national emergency, or other contingency operations, and to assist the Army in projecting land combat power. The Active Guard Reserve (AGR) program provides active duty reserve soldiers (officer and enlisted) to Army Reserve units and Regular Army units to support Army Reserve missions."³⁰ Ultimately, the AGRs were primarily used only as support for the TPU leadership of the unit as unit administrators. As the Army Reserve transforms to an operational force, a need has emerged to use the Army Reserve AGR's in select command, deputy command positions and staff primaries as the units transform to an operational force. The competency levels of training and education needed for AGR officers in an operational force were never really developed thru the Colonel level in the strategic reserve force. This leads to the four competencies that need to be developed in all officers as they grow to become strategic leaders. The first of these competencies is technical experience.

As defined in Army Regulation 600-100 core leader competency number six "prepares self": "Leaders are prepared to execute their leadership responsibilities fully.

They will be aware of their limitations and strengths and seek to develop and improve their knowledge. Only through preparation for missions and other challenges, awareness of self and situations, and the practice of lifelong learning and development can individuals fulfill the responsibilities of leadership.”³¹ It also states that this core competency is important at all three levels (tactical, organizational, and strategic) with each level becoming more complex and interdependent in ways that require more responsibility, accountability, and authority.³² The primary concern is at the strategic level for the Army Reserve AGR Colonel. They were not getting the experience through assignments and jobs to properly develop as effective strategic leaders in the operational reserve AGR program to prepare them for their new job responsibilities. The culture of the AGR program as a strategic force was not structured to instill this important core competency as officers progressed through the ranks. Instead, the AGR’s main focus of assignment was to be the support for the TPU leadership and the day-to-day administration of the supported unit, get no level of technical experience can compensate for a lack of vision when preparing and leading an operational reserve unit.

Vision is an extremely important competency that all strategic leaders must develop and as the Army Reserve organization changes, the strategic leadership must have a visionary sense of future and change. Strategic vision can best be defined as “a means of focusing effort and progressing toward a desired future—what ought to be.”³³ Vision provides a sense of ultimate purpose, direction, and motivation for members and activities within the organization.³⁴ Essentially, vision helps strategic leaders bring focus and direction to the unit/organization as the Army Reserve evolved to meet the changing needs of the Army. Understanding this competency is very important to the

strategic leader at the Colonel level and must be developed throughout an officer's career. The strategic leader must understand what vision is and how to translate higher level visions into his organization. In addition, the leader must develop his vision at his level of command to match and support the end state of the Army Reserve's vision. Strategic leaders should not be alone in mapping organizational visions, but have input from all levels within their organization. Vision has to be developed as leader's progress through the ranks. In order to facilitate input and communicate their vision, a strong leader must be a proficient communicator.

Communication is probably the most important competency that that is needed in the leader today. Without good communication skills, other competencies that strategic leaders possess cannot be fully realized. The definition of communication as a core competency is best defined in Army Regulation 600-100: "Leaders communicate by expressing ideas and actively listening to other. Effective leaders understand the nature and power of communication and practice effective communication techniques so they can better relate to others and translate goals into actions. Communication is essential to all other leadership competencies."³⁵ A leader must not only communicate his desires, but also understand the communication coming down from higher leadership to the organization. Now that communication has been defined as a necessary core competency, it is important to note how this relates to the AGR Colonel with the emerging mission in the operational reserve.

There was a saying in the former strategic Army Reserve by most AGRs that "knowledge is power" and as a result of this belief, in some cases, AGRs would not share information. Worst still, they did not communicate it to the TPU leadership. This

may have been a cultural characteristic in the Army Reserve and a reflection of the suppressed leadership roles AGR's played in units as administrators rather than as leaders. As the RC is transitioning to an operational reserve, AGRs are now playing a more major role in unit leadership; the importance of the communication competency must be developed and instilled not only at the strategic Colonel level, but also at all levels of unit leadership. Building on this idea of a communication competency is the competency of "truth to power" and starts at the early stages of an officers career.

Communicating, "truth to power", may be the most difficult communication competency that is needed at the AGR strategic level in the new operational force. To speak, "truth to power", an individual has to have the confidence and the expertise to have the comfort level in order tells it right. Cumulatively, the last competency (incorporating all of the others) is *leading others* as an AGR strategic leader.

Leading soldiers and commanding a unit in the United States Army is no doubt the best job in the Army. This competency as defined in Army regulation 600-100 is "Leaders motivate, inspire, and influence others to take the initiative, work toward a common purpose, accomplish tasks, and achieve organizational objectives."³⁶ This competency may be unusual or even ridiculous to have to describe at the Colonel level, but opportunities have not been available for all the current group of AGR Colonel's to develop these skills during their careers as they have moved up in the ranks. Leading others is an attribute that needs to be developed early in a career because it also contributes in the development of other three competencies needed in a strategic leader.

As the Army Reserve transforms from a strategic force to operational force, the AGR role is changing. AGRs are now being sourced at the operational level with opportunities to hold positions that were previously only held by the TPU soldiers. The traditional TPU soldier is still the backbone of strategic leadership in the Army Reserve, but now the AGRs will need to have the opportunity to develop not just the four competencies mentioned, but all the competencies that are inherent in an operational leader.

The Pentathlete AGR

What is the pentathlete leader and how does it pertain to the AGR senior leadership and competencies? In July 2005 the Office of the Secretary of the Army established the Review of Education, Training and Assignments of Leaders (RETAL) Task Force. The Task Force was formed to address the need to develop multi-skilled leaders at all ranks – especially at the senior levels.³⁷ “The Secretary of the Army (SA) and the Chief of Staff of the Army (CSA) vision of a “Petathlete” leader is a metaphor for growing and developing Army leaders in the 21st century,”³⁸ The attributes that are possessed by a multi-skilled leader are high integrity and character as well as a confident and competent decision maker. This includes being innovative and adaptive and a prudent risk taker. Leaders need to be empathetic and positive, civilian and military educated and be a profession quality communicator.³⁹

As the Army Reserve transforms to an operational force, the pentathlete leader vision of the Army leadership has been identified as an initiative that is important in the development of all Army officers to include AGR senior leaders. The RETAL found that officer training, assignments and leadership competencies required for the non-kinetic fight should be expanded and improved.⁴⁰ It also found that a culture exists in the Army

in which officers aspire to the highest positions of responsibility by selecting narrow career paths at the expense of development of skills needed in the non-kinetic spectrum.⁴¹ These findings are not limited to active Army officers, but also apply to the operational Army Reserve AGR and TPU officers.

Chief of the Army Reserve LTG Stultz recognizes the importance of the pentathlete leader in the transformation of the Army Reserve to an operational reserve force and the role of all senior Army Reserve officers to include the new culture of operational senior AGR officer as either a staff officer or commander. “To ensure we invest scarce resources wisely, we established the Senior Leader Development Office to develop a process that shapes the force, develops best-qualified soldiers and enhances readiness in support of an operational Army Reserve.”⁴² He also goes on to say “while the Senior Leader Development Office works to develop and refine processes and to accomplish this intent, Army Reserve leaders must take steps to continue their development into the pentathlete.”⁴³

Army Reserve Boards

The Army Reserve AGR promotion and board selection process to Colonel has become very competitive as it pertains to senior leader competencies. A policy change in FY05 to allow AGRs to serve until their Mandatory Retirement Date (MRD) has led many current Colonels to serve until 30 years of commissioned service, potentially limiting promotion opportunities. A majority of the AGRs promoted to Colonel in the strategic reserve did not have the opportunity to develop some of these needed operational core competencies due to the culture of the strategic reserve and most are still serving in the Army Reserve until they reach MRD due to the change in policy. Under the old system, once an AGR officer reached 20 years of active federal service,

the officer had to go before a 2 year continuation board in order to continue in the AGR program. If not selected to continue, the soldier would either have to be released from active duty (REFAD) to continue serving in the Army Reserve or retire.

Beginning in FY10, the Army Reserve will convene an AGR REFAD board to consider Colonels and LTCs for release from the AGR program.⁴⁴ All officers considered will have at least 19 years Active Federal Service (AFS) and officers selected for REFAD will not be removed prior to completing 20 years AFS.⁴⁵ The “possible eligible population that will be considered will be 148 Colonels with 3 years of time in grade and 68 LTCs who are first time non-select for Colonel, to include a number of two and three time non-selects.”⁴⁶ “The eligible population and select objectives will be determined after analysis by the Human Resource Component (HRC), Army Reserve Full Time Staff Directorate (FTSD) and Army Reserve G-1.”⁴⁷ This board will probably convene for at least the next 4 to 5 years to partially resolve the issue of officers who do not reflect the requirements of an operational leader in the Colonel ranks and make room for the new operational AGR senior leader who possesses the required competencies. The present Colonel force was selected under the old system which selected competent leaders in a strategic Army Reserve to fill an Army Reserve structure that was support and staff based.

What does the AGR promotion board look for in the selection to Colonel? The SLDO office has developed a brief, “Leader Action to Develop Senior Leaders”, and in this brief the criteria for selection is spelled out and geared to operational competencies. The criteria the board is looking for in selection of an operational AGR senior leader are: “*quality Officer Evaluation Reports (OER)’s, deployment/operational experience,*

command/leadership assignments, advanced civilian education, and advanced military education and assignment diversity."⁴⁸ This is not to say that the selection board is not looking at the entire file and evaluating the entire career of the officer, but that these items are core in selection of the future AGR operational senior leader.

The AGR officer in the operational reserve is now having many of the same opportunities which were previously afforded to the TPU officer in preparing and developing competencies needed to be competitive for selection to Colonel. Additionally, now all AGR captains/majors have the opportunity to compete for selection for an Army Reserve company command, which is extremely important in the early development of a leader. This is a 2 year command and is not an exclusively AGR position, but TPU positions that can be filled by either a TPU or an AGR depending on requirements set by the higher command. HRC is also managing AGR officer's early in their careers to ensure competency will be achieved to be competitive for promotion, Command, and Professional Military Education (PME) as their careers mature.

Professional Military Education

Professional Military Education is vital and extremely important in helping to shape competent operational AGRs. There are very few military leaders who possess the qualities and operation leader competencies needed to be a good strategic leader without training. Operational assignments and the experience gained are great for competency development, but what is taught in the classroom can enhance development. PME is an excellent opportunity for AGRs to gain knowledge that will be carried with them in operational assignments and their development as a strategic senior leader. PME is very competitive in the AGR force, but it is a successful tool in

helping to develop competencies in AGR officers and senior leaders as the Army Reserve transforms to an operational force.

Senior Leader Development Office (SLDO)

The Army Reserve created the Senior Leader Development Office (SLDO) in late FY06 to help grow the operational senior leader force to include AGRs, TPUs and Individual Mobilization Augmentee (IMA) soldiers. The “office was developed to ensure senior leaders have the knowledge, skills and abilities they need to accomplish the Army Reserve mission in the 21st Century.”⁴⁹ The major initiatives that were set for this office were to “ensure the Army Reserve develops the benchmark of “best-qualified senior leaders”⁵⁰ and to support all facets of Human Resource (HR) transformation, to include AGR re-engineering.⁵¹ Validate, enhance, align, correct senior leader development path from top down, develop and utilize all categories of Army Reserve senior leaders, standardize senior leader contact throughout the Army Reserve and support officers and units in the field.⁵² Finally, to develop and support Army Reserve SLDO seminars, joint training, a pre-command course, fellowships, and Joint, Interagency, Intergovernmental and Multinational (JIIM) experiences and provide senior leaders with development recommendations, advice and direction, assignment assistance, selection board trends, and confidence in development path.⁵³”

The initiatives set forth by this office are the beginnings of what will be a long road in the transformation of developing an operationally competent AGR force at the Colonel level. “Transforming the FTS/AGR program is not a “fire and forget” undertaking. Rather, it is an evolving process that will occur over time and action plans will specify short and long range actions that will transform FTS in the Army Reserve.”⁵⁴

Recommendations

The Army Reserve HRC has done an excellent job with operational transformation of senior AGR leadership over the last few years as research has shown. It is recommended that HRC continue with initiatives that have been implemented and continue to improve on current management of the AGR senior leaders. Below are some specific recommendations that will improve and ensure the Army Reserve pool of AGR Colonels have the four core competencies of technical/preparing self, vision, leading of others and the communication skills needed to lead units in an operational Army Reserve.

To continue to improve on senior leader development in the Army Reserve, HRC will need to establish a mechanism to track AGR leader development much like the RETAL study suggests. In the RETAL study, there is a third initiative that creates Leader Development Assignment Panels.⁵⁵ This would be a great tool to help focus HRC on AGR operational leader competency development. "The leader Development Assignment Panel will identify and provide the best operational career field officers with 'non-kinetic' leadership development opportunities emphasizing mental agility, enterprise management, or cross-cultural savvy through assignments outside the traditional tactical track."⁵⁶ The initiative goes on to say that selected officers would be afforded the opportunity to be assigned to civilian graduate schools and internships that would help further the officer's career.⁵⁷

The Army Reserve has to take another look at the how it manages its officer AGR force before and after the soldier completes 20 years of active federal service (AFS). The change that has allowed officers the opportunity to stay until MRD has caused some operational competency issues with some of the senior leadership in the

AGR program in today's Army Reserve. This is not to say that the Army Reserve promoted the wrong officers and not the best qualified, but to say that promotion criteria was based on the old Army Reserve as a strategic force. Many of the Colonel's in the current population that have 20 years AFS or less are not competing for Command and PME which is having an effect on attaining the needed operational competencies of senior leadership. The recommendation is to revert to continuation boards for all LTC's and Colonel's no matter how many years of AFS and the officers selected for continuation will have the privilege and opportunity to serve until MRD. The short term impact would eliminate those officers who fail to master the competencies from the AGR program. The long term impact would be a change in the AGR program culture in which only the best qualified operational and strategic AGR officers have the opportunity to serve until MRD. The continuation boards would ensure the Army Reserve was continuing its most competent senior leader AGR force.

HRC Career Management Officers (CMO) would rotate every 2 years with operational AGR Majors within the Army Reserve force. It is extremely important for CMOs to understand the Army Reserve operational path of officers and the knowledge of what assignments are needed to build competencies of an operational leader. Young officers coming into the AGR program must understand that homesteading in staff jobs in the strategic Army Reserve was the culture of the past. But, in today's Army Reserve operational force, the career path for AGRs is seeking operational command and operationally focused assignments.

The Army Reserve structure has many staff positions as do all active components across the military. Leadership understands that these jobs are important

and must be filled, but the tendency under a strategic force was that AGRs were the primary source of these Army Reserve staff positions. It is hard to build the core leadership competencies when AGRs are being assigned one staff job after another. It is recommended that AGRs not serve more than one consecutive assignment in a staff position before being assigned to an operational unit. It is understood that after doing an operational job, the next job may be back in a staff position, but this balance will help develop competent understanding leadership. Under operational Army Reserve it is important that the AGRs career path also reflects the operational side in order to instill strategic and core competencies needed in the senior ranks.

The Army Reserve PME program, as noted earlier, is very competitive for Army Reserve officers to include the officer AGR force. This is especially true for seats at the Senior Service Colleges (SSC) resident courses. Management of these officers tends to be short-sighted for future career paths. Many of the AGR officers attending SSC do not have a follow on assignment prior to arrival at the institution for which they were selected. The Army Reserve has a huge investment in and trust of these future Colonel strategic leaders. Management needs to improve to ensure these officers are placed in strategic operational positions. It is recommended that all officers attending SSC be pulled into the SLDO office for personnel and assignment management. At this stage in the operational transformation of the AGR senior leader force, the SLDO office is better equipped to place these officers in future assignments and ensure the Army Reserve is getting the return on investment of a senior leader attending SSC.

Conclusion

For the first 100 years of the existence of the Army Reserve, its primary mission was to be a future-oriented strategic force. After the Vietnam War, the total force

concept was enacted and the AGR full-time personnel category was created. Since the September 11th terrorist attacks, the culture and role of the Army Reserve force has shifted to an operational force orientation. With this shift to an operational approach, the AGRs' role as primary day-to-day unit administrators, has taken more of a leadership role that was once in the jurisdiction of TPU leadership.

The challenge for the Army Reserve of today has been to ensure the competency level of the AGR Colonels will meet the operational needs of the Army as it transforms. All four competencies are important and need to be developed in line with the recommendations. The Army Reserve and its leadership understand the role of the AGR senior leadership and have many initiatives in place to ensure competency levels will meet operational roles. As the Army Reserve transforms to the 21st Century operationally more initiatives will be implemented to ensure operational success.

The Army Reserve has identified there is a need to ensure the current population of Colonels and LTCs are evolving into operational senior leaders and will address this with a board action starting in 2010. Criteria for selection to continue in the AGR program are being evaluated by the Senior Leadership at HRC and OCAR. This initiative will ensure operational Colonel Competency in the Army Reserve.

The SLDO office has been tasked to assign and ensure development of the senior leader AGR force. The challenges of this office will be tremendous and the recommendations proposed will be a great addition to initiatives already in place.

Transformation will be hard and changing the culture of an Army Reserve that was strategic to one that is operational will take time. The strategy that is in place and evolving will ensure AGR operational senior leadership success. The Army Reserve's

senior leadership is competent and is meeting today's challenges of an operational force.

Endnotes

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