

Strategy Research Project

National Military Strategy: Army Reserve Readiness

by

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United States Army Reserve



United States Army War College
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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

National Military Strategy: Army Reserve Readiness

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Abstract

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In order to protect the interest of the United States, the military must be prepared to defend the nation's freedom and protect the needs of the American people. For the past 10 years, the Army Reserve has been active in providing combat support and combat service support to sustain mobilization during the War on Terrorism. However, this effort has not come without a challenge. The Army Reserve has manage to supply units for Overseas Contingency Operation (OCO) through the cross leveling of personnel and equipment. Though this current method is working, it should be abandoned for future missions. To increase readiness, the Army Reserve will have to redefine their efforts and become operationally ready by having the required personnel and equipment to do its mission.

National Military Strategy: Army Reserve Readiness

During the Cold War era, the reserve components were a part of a strategic concept that was designed to be used as a backfill for the active component in the event of some catastrophic disaster. Since the times of Operation Desert Storm and the end of the Cold War, the reserve components have been involuntarily activated six times.¹ This increase in the frequency of involuntary activation has caused the reserve components to move from a strategic reserve to an operational reserve. However, this transition has not come without a challenge and has raised resource issues, particularly with personnel shortages. The current mission of the reserve component, under Title 10 of the U.S. Code, is to provide trained, equipped, and ready Soldiers and interrelated units to meet the global requirements across the full spectrum of operations.²

As a land based force, the Army Reserve is a key factor in The Army multi-component unit force. The Army Reserve must be prepared to provide a highly skilled and flexible force capable of sustaining the Army in whatever capacity is necessary.³ As General Casey said before he retired, "We are now in an era of persistent conflicts, which will require a lot of labor, mostly ground troops."⁴ In order for the Army Reserve to fulfill their obligation and support the current Army Force Generation (AFORGEN) model, it must take an aggressive stance on correcting personnel shortages, particularly among junior and mid-grade officers. For example since the end of the Cold War, the Army Reserve has continued to struggle with maintaining the required amount of captains and majors. To mitigate this shortage, the Army Reserve has used the method of cross leveling personnel and equipment to supply the requirements needed for Overseas Contingency Operation (OCO) while failing to produce a permanent solution

for the problem. Analysis of this problem determines that these shortages are primarily due to poor recruitment, low accession, and a multitude of socio-economic factors. Despite the recent attention given to this dilemma, the projective time to eliminate the shortages is still a decade away unless positive changes can be made with regard to recruiting. The Army Reserve routinely receives commission officers from three sources: Reserve Officer Training Corp (ROTC), Direct Commissions, and Regular Army officers transitioning into the Army Reserve. This paper will address the reasons why the Army Reserve is experiencing a shortage of mid-grade officers and proffer a recommendation for improvements.

The Commissioned Officer

Whereas the None Commissioned Officer (NCO) is considered the backbone of the Army, the Army could not survive without its Officer Corps. Since the creation of the Army, the Army Officer Corps always has been considered the executive agency of the Army. Officers hold positions of authority giving them specific duties. This generally involves ensuring the welfare, safety, moral, and professional development of the Soldiers whom they are appointed to oversee. The combatant laws of war require that an officer be in charge; however, the officer in charge does not necessarily have to be commissioned or warrant. Commission officers are commissioned by the authority of the President of the United States. Still, most army officers have a bachelor's degree and if they do not possess that prerequisite, they have to obtain the degree before being promoted to the rank of captain.⁵

For many years, the Army has had several methods of recruiting/commissioning junior officers. The Army Reserve recruits junior officers through ROTC, Direct Commissioning, and Regular Army transitioning, while the Regular Army recruits junior

officers through Military Schools/Academies, ROTC, Officer Candidate School (OCS) and direct commissioning. The National Guard recruits junior officers similar to the Army Reserve; however, they also have their own state ran military schools and academies. Of all these sources, Army ROTC is clearly the largest source of recruiting. Since the origin of Army ROTC, it has commissioned more than half a million second lieutenants.⁶ Prior to 1992, the Army Reserve led in commissioning lieutenants; however, due to the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT), ROTC primary focus shifted to meeting the needs of the Regular Army. Today, Regular Army gets most of the newly commissioned officers while the Army Reserve registers in last place in comparison to the other components. In order for the Army Reserve to increase and sustain its junior officer strength, it will have to increase their annual commissioning rate by several hundreds.⁷

Reason for the Shortage

Several factors contribute to the Army Reserve junior and mid-grade officer shortages: the lack of perceived threat, a historically strong United States economy, an increased job market among college graduates and an increase in Active Army commissioning to support GWOT.

Lack of Perceived Threat

In the early 1990s with the fall of the Berlin Wall and the subsequent collapse of the Soviet Union, The National Command Authority, perceiving a lack on global threat, made a decision to reduce the combined army end-strength by nearly 400,000 men and women.⁸ The United States' swift and efficient victory in Operation Desert Storm exacerbated the view that maintaining high levels in force was inadvisable because for six weeks, during the aerial campaign and 100 hours of ground assault, the United States public witnessed the invulnerability of its military. In short, the United States

military triumphed against the fourth largest military in the world, while equipped and manned with Soldiers who were trained for an operation similar to the Fulda Gap. We overestimated (perhaps even grossly overestimated) the capability and strength of our opponent. The subsequent overpowering success sent the message to the American Public and leadership alike that perhaps a smaller military is sufficient for future missions after demonstrating world dominance in conventional warfare. However, because no one could clearly identify our current and future threats, decision makers could not define what a smaller military should look like.

Nevertheless, the task of shaping this future Army rested on the shoulders of former Joint Chief of Staff, General Gordon A. Sullivan. General Sullivan was nominated by President George H. Bush during a transformational period for the U.S. military. General Sullivan had the task of reshaping the military from the Cold War strategy to the unknown. The Secretary of Defense had developed a new strategy that called for a transfer from forward deployed forces and toward force regeneration and mobilization.⁹ This new strategy recommended that The United States rely more on the reserve component forces and less on active duty forces.¹⁰ The Army Reserve component's Combat Service (CS) and Combat Service Support (CSS) units (which are the Army Reserve core units) played an essential role in Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm and proved that they were able and ready to deploy early and assimilate into the Total Force from the outset.¹¹ However, the budget request projected large cuts in the Army in both components, with reductions nearly equal in proportion.¹²

**Army Personnel Strength Glidepath FY 90-95
(Reflects FY 92/93 President's Budget)**

(End of FY)	FY 90(Actual)	FY91	FY92	FY93	FY94	FY95	Reduction, 1990-1995
Active	750,600	702,000	660,200	618,200	576,700	535,500	29%
USAR	299,100	318,700	282,700	254,500	234,100	229,800	23%
NG	437,000	457,300	410,900	366,300	328,600	321,000	23%
Total Soldiers	1,486,700	1,478,200	1,353,800	1,239,000	1,139,400	1,086,300	27%
Civilian	380,377	363,122	329,340	314,743	307,196	302,795	20%
Total	1,867,077	1,841,322	1,683,140	1,553,743	1,446,596	1,389,089	26%

Figure 1: Army Personnel Strength¹³

According to the above chart (Figure 1), the Army reduced its forces by more than 400,000 army and civilian personnel. Also during this period, the Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC) were being designed as a plan to close more than 350 military installations from 1989 to 2005.

However, on September 11, 2001, Americans' lives were forever changed with a terror attack on America's soil. This attack caused America to go to war in Afghanistan and later Iraq. Prior to the start of the Iraqi war, General Shinseki testified to Congress that the war would require more troops than what was initially planned by the Bush Administration.¹⁴ He suggested that it would take approximately 400,000 troops a number significantly higher than the 50,000, Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld suggested to the President. However, before the start of the war, Rumsfeld settled with sending 150,000 Soldiers into Iraq.

In April 2003, as the U.S. Forces were released from their staging areas in Kuwait to storm across Iraq to seized and conquer Bagdad, The United States military planners and senior leaders were convinced that this engagement would be a repeat of the last war. In fact, this conflict was being referred to as "Desert Storm II." Within a few

days, our military had seized Bagdad. However, it was not understood until later that nation building would become a new and difficult mission set for our military. Although Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW) has been in our lexicon for over a decade, the army never grasped that the term MOOTW could transition in meaning to incorporate manpower-intensive, cost-excessive nation building.

Conversely, military leaders had never imagined armed conflict would someday require endless patrolling, frequent contact, and cooperation with local populations and sporadic engagement with an enemy whose culture and religion was a conundrum; therefore, forces were not trained for such missions. A better equipped Army may have include the following: greater number of Civil Affairs units and more intensively trained personnel, greater contract supervision capability, a larger transportation community along with a quartermaster community to supply, and a maintenance community to keep it all operating. Coincidentally, these combat service support functions are the Army Reserve core competencies. Nonetheless, these were the services most generously outsourced to defense contractors. Still, today's Army Reserve is exclusively positioned and structured to provide the operational support needed to meet the nation's CS and CSS requirements. The biggest challenge is providing the personnel needed to our current structure.

Civilian Job Market

Concurrent with the military force reduction of the early 1990s was an economic boom that resulted in a national unemployment rate of 4.5 % (until this period economic unemployment was generally calculated at 7.0 %).¹⁵ Though this economic period was also characterized by massive outsourcing of American jobs, the jobs generally outsourced were unskilled labor jobs.¹⁶ This created a tremendous extraction of the

high-achieving college graduates who might have in an earlier period been attracted to the military. Additionally, service in the Army Reserve traditionally had been an effective way to develop professional skill-sets and personal potential as a leader. Evidence of this is the aggressive recruiting of Junior Military Officers (JMO) through firms, such as Cameron and Brooks and Lucas and Associates. This aggressive recruiting developed because service as a platoon leader, company commander, and battalion primary staff were highly regarded. In fact, some deduced that these military leadership experiences provided skills development for the Junior Officers and low cost management development for their employers. As the Army Reserve officer recruiting continue to decline and international conflicts were held at bay, colleges and universities began offering specialized education programs for qualifying college graduates for positions traditionally pursued by JMO's. The advantages gained by continued service were diminished. By the 1990s a college graduate may conclude that he or she really does not need to be a transportation platoon leader, maintenance company commander or a battalion S4, to be considered for a coveted management position. All they needed to do was get a Supply Chain Management degree. Therefore, the incentive for both employee and employer to serve and support military services had diminished as well. ROTC had a tough time recruiting cadets and the junior officers who were commissioned, perhaps saw service not as entry into the profession of arms but doing time to pay back student loans.

Recruiting and Commissioning Junior Officers

In many of the cadet commands, the Army Reserve is commissioning only one to two cadets a year, which is opposite of what took place 20 years ago. The Army Reserve should not reduce efforts to commission lieutenants just because the Regular

Army has a need for increase. The Army Reserve is currently short 5,000 captains and nearly 3,000 majors.¹⁷ The Army Reserve will have to take an aggressive stance on recruiting and increasing their commission rate in order to ameliorate these shortages. Currently, the Army Reserve has the lowest commission requirements set by The Department of the Army (DA) and the Army Reserve is doing little to increase commissioning beyond these requirements.

Three-year commissioning requirements (Set by DA)

	2010	2011	2012
Regular Army	3050	3200	3050
Army Reserve	750	800	750
National Guard	1300	1400	1500

Figure 2: Commissioning Requirements¹⁸

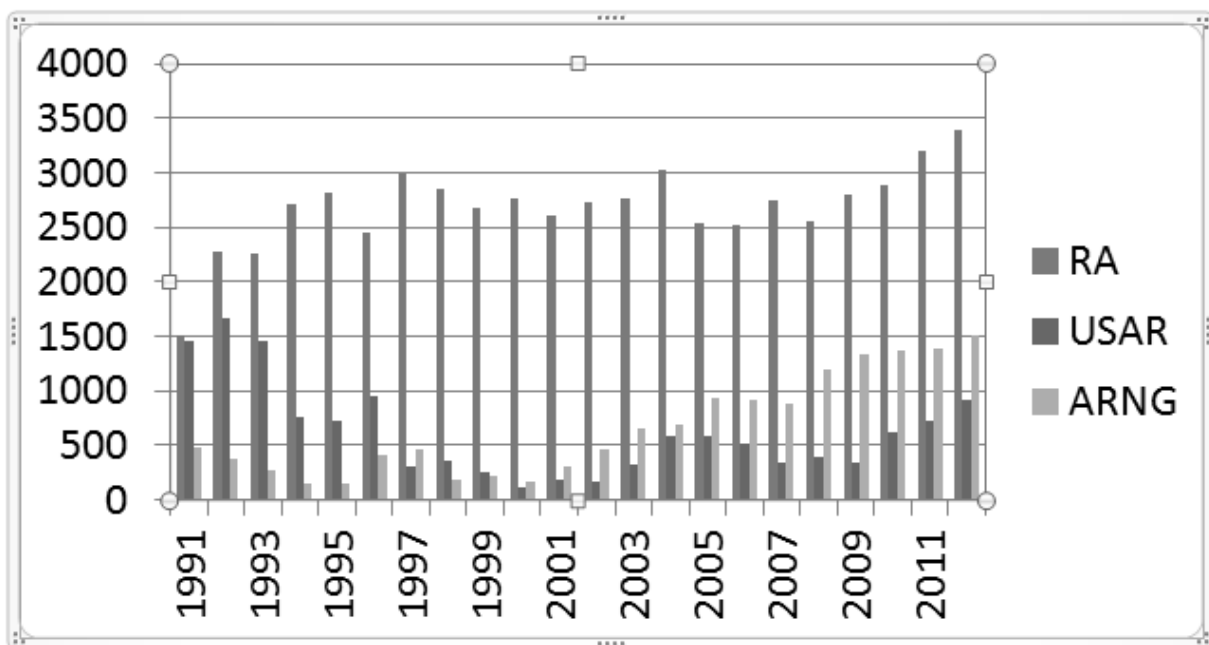


Figure 3: Army Components' Past Commission Rate¹⁹

The Army Reserve experienced a strength increase from a 190,000 to its current strength of 205,000.²⁰ While its strength grew, its officer requirement also grew, subsequently widening the mid-grade officer shortage. The end strength of the National Guard is extraordinarily higher when compared to the Army Reserve by more than 130,000 Soldiers.²¹ It is obvious that the National Guard does a better job of recruiting and commissioning lieutenants than the Army Reserve. Currently, they are more than 100% with its lieutenant strength; but like the Army Reserve, they have a difficult time maintaining their mid-grade officer strength.²² Having acquired their lieutenant strength more than 100% makes it much easier for the National Guard to fix its mid-grade officer shortage. Because the ARNG has more sources of commissioning than the Army Reserve, they have a much greater commissioning rate. The chart below shows the National Guard commissioning rate and source over a twelve-year span.

ARNG Officer Commission Source 2001 - 2012													
Commission Source	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Total
Academy Graduate, USAFA										1	2		3
Academy Graduate, USMA	7		67	58	56	85	126	114	114	83	30	9	749
Academy Graduate, USMMA										1	1		2
Academy Graduate, USNA									1	3	2		6
Aviation Trng Prog. (excl OCS/AOCS)	4	4	3	4			2	2	1				20
Direct Appointment, All Others	337	353	302	261	257	299	370	407	479	208	108	29	3,410
Direct Appointment, Professional	203	258	279	243	223	204	223	309	303	260	331	92	2,928
NG State-OCS	793	1,320	1,469	1,251	999	884	1,011	1,232	1,231	924	788	135	12,037
Off. Candidate, Aviation, Trng School	69	62	81	81	70	99	134	126	194	107	56	26	1,105
Other	682	189	122	83	126	103	114	150	258	858	1,579	348	4,612
ROTC/NROTC (Non-Scholarship)	680	698	695	817	946	1,078	1,009	1,249	1,064	868	552	108	9,764
ROTC/NROTC (Scholarship)	207	266	321	329	319	357	468	512	513	513	541	80	4,426
Total	2,982	3,150	3,339	3,127	2,996	3,109	3,457	4,101	4,158	3,826	3,990	827	39,062

Figure 4: ARNG Officer Commission Source ²³

The Regular Army and National Guard have a much larger minimum requirement than the Army Reserve and nearly always exceed their goal by more than one-hundred lieutenants while the Army Reserve remains satisfied with meeting their minimum requirement.

The National Guard focuses more on recruiting than the Army Reserve. One can walk into any National Guard Armory, and there is someone there who can sign him or her up. Walk into a US Army Reserve Center and the Army Reserve Career Counselor can escort him or her to a USAREC recruiting station if they have the time. Once a potential ROTC cadet has enlisted in the National Guard, his or her local ROTC Recruiting Operations Officer (ROO) has no incentive to try to move him or her from the National Guard to the Army Reserve when he or she is ready to sign a ROTC SMP contract. Conversely, when a ROO meets a prospective SMP cadet, it is often easier to place that cadet in a National Guard unit than it is to put them in an Army Reserve unit. They have (at least in Alabama) a single point of contact in the National Guard for officer accessions – a chief warrant officer they can call to place a cadet with any kind of unit anywhere in the state. The Army Reserve does not have anything so responsive, so why would a ROO try to work with the Army Reserve when they can just pick up the phone and call the Guard POC (Point of Contact)? Also, there is more National Guard than Army Reserve units to choose from. Why would a person choose to join an Army Reserve organization that is 35 miles from his home or school when there are two or three National Guard units to choose from with 10 or 15 miles?

Another reason the National Guard out performs the Army Reserve, is that the Adjutant General (TAG) of the Alabama National Guard requires that at least three AL Major Commands (MACOMs) visit every Cadet Command within the state once a year. These visits are designed recruit the commissioned cadets who do not access into active duty.²⁴

In order for the Army Reserve to improve, they must do something similar to what the ARNG is currently doing. To start, they must look to the ROTC Cadet Commands as a training platform as opposed to a recruiting mechanism. By this, it means encouraging young TPU enlisted members to join their local ROTC programs while attending college.

A case study was conducted two years ago by an Army Reserve Headquarters located in Alabama. This study was done to determine what issues the Army Reserve was experiencing with commissioning ROTC cadets. Typically colleges and universities in Alabama historically have strong ROTC programs and successfully commissioned a greater number of cadets than similar size institutions in other states.

Cadet Commands in Alabama

This survey will provide anecdotal evidence of how the Army Reserve commissioning rate has fallen to an all-time low over the past 20 years.

Table 1: Cadet Commands in Alabama²⁵

School	Average Yearly commission	Active Component	ALARNG	Army Reserve
Auburn	25	20	4	1
Auburn at Montgomery	12	9	2	1
Jacksonville State	15	12	2	1

University				
Tuskegee University	9	7	0	2
Alabama A&M University	16	12	3	1
University of Alabama	27	18	7	2
University of Alabama, Birmingham	16	12	3	1
University of North Alabama	7	4	2	1
University of South Alabama	7	4	2	1
Marion Military Institute	45	4	35	6

Auburn University

- The faculty and Staff consist of mostly active duty personnel along with a few contractors. At least one contractor is a member of the AL National Guard, and one is a member of the Army Reserve.

Issues:

- The contracted cadres who are members of the Army Reserve are not allowed to recruit for the Army Reserve.
- Unlike the Army Reserve, the Alabama National Guard offers an additional \$1,000 per semester toward tuition assistance.
- At this university, the ALNG funded most of the University ROTC special events.

Auburn University at Montgomery

- The faculty and staff consist of mostly active duty persons and one contractor.

There is currently no Army Reserve representation.

Issues:

- Some cadets experience pay problems when applying for tuition assistance through the Army Reserve. Cadets are required to apply for tuition assistance through AKO. Some cadets find the process complicated and become frustrated because it is not user friendly. When the cadets seek help from their SMP unit, no one at the unit seems to understand the process. This sometimes causes the cadets to switch over and join the ALNG where they get paid within a couple of weeks.
- All ALNG units offer SMP slots whereas only a few of the Army Reserve units offer the program.

Jacksonville State University

- Faculty and Staff consist of mostly contractors with about an even split of ARNGs and Army Reserve members.

Issues

- The ALNG will pay tuition assistance one year out before a cadet completes Basic and AIT whereas the Army Reserve will not.

Tuskegee University

- Faculty and Staff consist of mostly active duty personnel with one Army Reserve (AGR) member.

Alabama A&M University

- The faculty and Staff consist of mostly retired active duty contractors. They currently have one Army Reserve AGR MAJ, and one contractor who is a member of the AL National Guard.

Issue

- Recently received an Army Reserve recruiter who operates her normal duties out of Alabama A&M Army ROTC building. Since her presence, the program has seen an increase in recruiting Army Reserve cadets. She is due to PCS and presently there is no back fill identified to replace her.

University of Alabama:

- Faculty and Staff consist of mostly active duty personnel and three contractors; two National Guardsmen and no Army Reserve representation.

Issue

- No Army Reserve representation.

University of Alabama, Birmingham

- The faculty and Staff consist of mostly active duty personnel; one Army Reserve AGR MAJ, and one contractor who are a member of the Army Reserve.

Issue

- Some cadets experience pay problems when applying for tuition assistance through the Army Reserve. Cadets are required to apply for tuition assistance through Army Knowledge Online (AKO). Some cadets find the process complicated and become frustrated because it is not user friendly. When the cadets seek help from their SMP unit, no one at the

unit seems to understand the process. This sometimes causes the cadets to switch over and join the ALNG where they get paid within a couple of weeks.

University of North Alabama:

- The faculty and Staff consist of mostly active duty personnel and three contractors (two Army Reserve and one National Guard).

Issue

- Reserve Recruiters do not help Cadets after they are recruited; they have a “hands off” attitude once a cadet signs on with the school.

University of South Alabama

- The faculty and Staff consist of two active duty persons; two retired contractors; one National Guard (Title 32) and no Army Reserve representation.

Issue

- No Army Reserve representation.

Marion Military Institute

- The faculty and Staff consist of mostly active duty personnel; four retired contractors; three National Guardsmen and one Army Reserve representative.

Issue

- MMI needs more contact with the Army Reserve and more Cadre representation. Virtually all of MMI's cadets will commission into the National Guard because they have to complete their degree before they

can go Regular Army. If the Army Reserve had better representation, more officers could possibly join the Army Reserve.

Based on the data from the case study, the Army Reserve gives the least amount of support to their cadets. With the Army Reserve commissioning far less lieutenants than the other components, it will be nearly impossible for them to correct their shortages unless they improve in recruiting. To improve, the Army Reserve must become strategic in its efforts and consider doing the following:

- Ensure that it positions at least one AGR officer or Army Reserve contractor at each cadet command dedicated to teaching and recruiting cadets for the Army Reserve.
- Require that each Reserve Readiness Command (RRC) and Operational & Functional Command (O&F) recruit and mentor a minimum of two prior service members who are attending college to join a nearby ROTC program.
- Require that each reserve unit have at least two Simultaneous Membership Program (SMP) positions on their Modified Table of Organization and Equipment (MTOE)/Table of Distribution and Allowance (TDA)

Another way of increasing their mid-grade officer strength, is receiving more active duty officers. As the regular army cut back its personnel count, due to sweeping budget cuts, the Army Reserve should see this as an opportunity to increase its personnel shortage. Thirteen percent of officers who leave the Regular Army sign up with the Army Reserve.²⁶ To increase the number of Regular Army Officers transitioning into the Army Reserve, the Reserve Component will have to improve its efforts in

educating junior officers regarding the benefits of being part of the Army Reserve. This may require changes to military regulation and federal law.²⁷

For instance, an individual who regretted ending his career with the Army after serving four years on active duty stated that he wished he had continued serving in the reserve component. He believed the army did not do enough to convince him to continue serving in the Army Reserve. The Army needs to do more to educate Soldiers about the possibility of continued service in the Army Reserve. The education process should start in ROTC and later be required for Soldiers out-processing out of the Active Army. They should also go a step farther by asking the Department of the Army for a policy change that will obligate Regular Army officers to serve as drilling reservists versus serving in the IRR (Inactive Ready Reserve) for their remaining military service obligation after leaving active duty.

Retention/Recruiting

Recruitment and Retention play hand in hand for the Army Reserve and National Guard. Retention for the Reserve Component can be viewed as retaining the Army Reserve junior officers as well as recruiting officers coming off active duty. The Army Reserve attrition rate is slightly higher than the National Guard and is getting higher each year. The Army Reserve made an attempt to address this problem by offering large bonuses to captains. Despite this attempt at remedying the effects of attrition, the attrition rate never changed. In order for the Army Reserve to improve their attrition rate, it has to focus on recruiting. As in retail, "Sales cures all," recruitment cures all for the Army. By recruiting junior officers, the Army Reserve increase it numbers. If the Army Reserve retained every lieutenant, captain, and major, their shortage of mid-grade

officers would still persist. That is why a larger base of officer accessions must be achieved quickly.²⁸

One way of retaining junior officers is by revamping their bonus program. Bonuses should be offered to lieutenants as a method of recruiting. In addition, bonuses (paid incrementally until they reach the rank of major) should be offered to qualified cadets. However, the former CAR (Chief of the Army Reserves), LTG Stultz, argued against recruiting junior Soldiers. He believed that the Army Reserve was overstaffed on junior Soldiers and the only way of addressing our mid-grade officer shortage was to recruit fewer junior officers and purposely go below our authorized end strength, to create a gap and focus more on absorbing Soldiers coming off active duty.²⁹ This is not a likely strategy because attrition among junior and mid-grade officers would further increase the shortages. Therefore, the idea of recruiting more junior officers should remain the primary option. Analysis of the current officer force structure for the Army Reserve demonstrates the conclusion that is out of balance and in need of an overhaul to correct the mid-grade officer shortage.

Another retention method the Army Reserve implemented a few years ago is the Lodging in Kind (LIK) program. It was implemented to assist junior enlisted and officers with lodging cost for those living more than 50 miles from their reserve unit. Though the program is currently in place, it is slowly coming to an end. If this program ends, it will be a tremendous burden for younger Soldiers and will very likely force junior Soldiers to contemplate leaving the Army Reserve.

In addition, because of our mid-grade officer shortage, the Army Reserve is forced to promote fully qualified instead of best qualified. Currently, officers who

complete his or her required education will most likely be promoted to the next rank. The knowledge of a sort of automatic promotion, which often comes without much personal effort, discourages officers from seeking commands or other challenging jobs. With today's economy, A Troop Program Unit (TPU) Soldier would more than likely put more effort into trying to impress him or her civilian boss than his or her military boss, especially among younger Soldiers. Soldiers realize that being in the reserve hinders their progress in the civilian market and are often forced to make hard decisions whether to remain in the Army Reserve.

Young Army Reserve officers find it more important to focus on their civilian careers than the military. Furthermore in recent years, employers have become more reluctant to invest in promoting a reservist for fear that he or she may get deployed. For obvious reasons, employers would never openly admit those fears, but the comments of the Soldiers testify to the truth in this matter. The GWOT has taken its toll on many employers despite the many Employer and Soldier campaigns. However, senior officers are more prone to make sacrifices because they are close to reaching retirement than junior and mid-grade officers.

Another source of recruitment the Reserve Component used to pool from is the Individual Ready Reserve (IRR). The IRR is part of the reserve component made up of former active duty and reserve Soldiers. These Soldiers receive no pay and are not required to drill or perform annual training unless called up by the president of the United States. However, in recent years, the amount of Soldiers who use to be in the IRR has decreased from 63,000 to its current state of 7,000.³⁰ Even though that is a large drop, the Army Reserve should still be aggressively seeking ways to enticed IRR

Soldiers of becoming a TPU member. This would significantly and positively affect the shortage issue.

Recommendation

Today's Army Reserve is faced with a major challenge of getting Soldiers to join or stay in the Army Reserve. For the past decade, America has been fighting the war on terrorism and many troops have had to deploy repeatedly to meet the nation's demands. These demands have not gone unnoticed and have caused the Army Reserve to struggle with maintaining a balanced force. Even though it has managed to meet its authorized end strength, it is out of balance and is still short nearly 8,000 captains and majors. In order to resolve these shortages, the Army Reserve will require a different approach from its current strategies, focusing more on recruiting junior officers and absorbing more captains coming off active duty.

ROTC is the largest source of officer recruiting. However, as shown in figure 3, the Army Reserve commission rate has fallen to an all-time low compared to what took place 20 years ago. Over the past two decades, the Army Reserve has had difficulty competing for recruits against the Regular Army and National Guard. The Regular Army offers full employment and the National Guard offers high-speed combat branches, which is more enticing to younger Soldiers than what the Army Reserve has to offer. However, with the right approach, the Army Reserve could very easily compete.

"Selling" the Army is similar to the way a dealership strategically sells cars.³¹ For example the Army Reserve is like a Chevrolet dealership that only has sedans and mini-van while the Regular Army and National Guard are General Motors dealerships.³² The Regular Army and the National Guard have the same Chevrolet models on their lots as the Army Reserve, but they also sell Buicks, Cadillac, sports cars, pick-up trucks, and

SUVs.³³ In this scenario, the General Motors dealerships would be moving more units than the Army Reserve. In order to remain viable in the car dealership market, The Army Reserve would have to seek ways to increase sales in the short-term but also diversify its stock so it could sustain a higher sales rate in the long term. In other words, it needs to develop a plan to convince consumers to buy the Chevy vehicles they have in stock today, but also start talking to General Motors about getting some other franchises and allocations for sportier model Chevys. As a short-term plan, the Army Reserve options could include:

- Cutting sticker prices = Increase commitment from eight to 10 years and provide an “in and out” path for Soldiers, Active Component (AC)/Reserve Component (RC) and RC/AC transition.
- Making deals better than the competitions’ = Use of the continuum of service program proposed by LTG Stultz.
- Convincing buyers that the Army Reserve products are better = Selling the long-term benefit of skill-sets offered in the Army Reserve.
- Motivating their sales force = Develop a strategic plan and promote it throughout the Army Reserve.

Now to project the hypothetical suggestions to the real life Army Reserve situation, cutting sticker prices is not really a viable quick fix. Getting away from the automotive analogy, it means cutting the Military Service Obligation (MSO) from, say, eight years to six years. This is according to Army Regulation 135-91, Service Obligation, Methods of Fulfillment, Participation Requirements, and Enforcement Procedures, which will take Department of Defense (DOD) approval at the very least.

Besides, the Army Reserve would have to consider the risks involved in giving up captains earlier on the back end in order to get more lieutenants on the front end. Also, if this strategy is employed, then it would necessitate another in about five or six years to keep those (now) captains in their ranks.

The Army Reserve already pays retention bonuses that are not producing the desired effects. It has to ponder other kinds of rebates, dealer discounts, and financing to potential customers. Many of the Army Reserve customers want Corvettes, but they just cannot afford the price. Again removed from the analogy, they did not make the Accessions Board cut to be Regular Army officers, so now they are in the Reserve Component's market. The Army Reserve has to get them to buy the Malibu it is selling instead of the National Guard's Camaro.

For at least the last two or three years, Cadets Command has offered to re-pay student loans for cadets accessed active duty who sign a Regular Army Service Obligation.³⁴ Cadets who accept this offer can get up to \$60,000 in return for one, two or three years of additional active duty service. It is important to mention that this offer is only made to cadets' accessed active duty. After the Accessions Board adjourns, only until then can The Army Reserve encourage cadets to request Army Reserve duty. If the Army Reserve could offer to re-pay student loans before the accession board meets, more cadets might consider joining the Army Reserve.

Because of immense budget cuts, the regular army is scaling back on their personnel count; therefore, the Army Reserve needs to examine recruiting Soldiers coming off active duty. The Army Reserve should view this as a prime opportunity to direct their attention on making the Army Reserve more appealing to these Soldiers. In

fact, the Army Reserve should assemble a task force designed to assist the Soldiers coming off active duty with finding civilian jobs, close to the Reserve centers that also need their skills and offer bonuses for critical skill sets. These forces should be set up on active army installations focusing on recruiting Soldiers in their last six month of active duty.

Again, the Army Reserve continues to face significant challenges when competing with the Regular Army and National Guard in recruiting junior officers. This challenge is expected to continue if the Army Reserve does not change its approach. In response, the Army Reserve must come up with a better plan to enhance their recruitment efforts by increasing ROTC Commission, increasing Direct Commission, and increasing the amount of officers coming to the Army Reserve from Regular Army.

Conclusion

Transitioning the Army Reserve and National Guard from a strategic reserve to an operational force will require it to think and operate differently. The Army Reserve can no longer be an army in waiting never expecting to deploy unless and until there is a major conflict. Under the current AFORGEN model, the Army's process for meeting combatant commanders' requirements, it is imperative that the Army Reserve remains personnel and equipment ready to support the GWOT along with other missions that may require the support of the reserve. Leaders at all levels must realize the readiness shortfalls and take an aggressive stance to correct the problem by spending more time developing a plan to recruit junior officers. One way to achieve this goal may be to adhere to the tenets outlined in the recommendation.

Endnotes

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