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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

17 August 2015

(U) ARI IMPACT TO THEATER AVIATION SUSTAINMENT MAINTENANCE GROUPS (TASMG). (U) The Army's only depot-level maintenance capability in the battlefield for all combat helicopters resides in the four Army National Guard (ARNG) TASMGs. The removal of all Apaches from the ARNG force structure through ARI will make it more difficult to recruit, train, and retain ARNG Apache mechanics; will negatively impact the mechanics' proficiency; and will limit the ARNG's ability to resource the full combat mission of the TASMG. Going forward, the established requirement for depot-level Apache maintenance on the battlefield can be resourced three ways. The ARNG can continue to do the mission with ARNG Apache mechanics, or the Army can fill the TASMG Apache positions with Active Component (AC) mechanics, or the Army can pay for maintenance contractors when the TASMG deploys. The fact that for 10 years TASMGs have maintained wartime maintenance capabilities for the Kiowa Warrior indicates a similar program for Apache maintenance is viable through an annual training program. The best value (and least costly) solution for the Army is to satisfy the Apache battlefield maintenance requirement with ARNG mechanics.

Consideration:

- a. How will implementing ARI affect full-time support within the TASMG?

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INFORMATION PAPER

19 August 2015

SUBJECT: Aviation Restructure Initiative (ARI) Impact to Theater Aviation Sustainment Maintenance Groups (TASMG)

1. Purpose: To study the impacts of implementing ARI on the Army National Guard's (ARNG) TASMG force structure.

2. Summary: The Army's only depot-level maintenance capability in the battlefield for all combat helicopters resides in the four ARNG TASMGs. The removal of all Apaches from the ARNG force structure through ARI will make it more difficult to recruit, train, and retain ARNG Apache mechanics; will negatively impact the mechanics' proficiency; and will limit the ARNG's ability to resource the full combat mission of the TASMG. Going forward, the established requirement for depot-level Apache maintenance on the battlefield can be resourced three ways. The ARNG can continue to do the mission with ARNG Apache mechanics, or the Army can fill the TASMG Apache positions with Active Component (AC) mechanics, or the Army can pay for maintenance contractors when the TASMG deploys. Though difficult, it is feasible for the ARNG to maintain Apache proficiency via an annual training program. The fact that most of the TASMGs have for many years maintained wartime maintenance capabilities for the Kiowa Warrior (KW) indicates a similar program for Apache maintenance is viable.

3. Facts.

b. TASMG is an ARNG Modified Table of Organization and Equipment (MTOE) manned solely with Guardsmen – Full Time and Traditional (M-day).

c. TASMG combat mission is to repair all Army helicopters during combat operations.

d. TASMG peacetime mission is to provide limited depot and Aviation Intermediate Maintenance (AVIM) for ARNG helicopters while at home station.

e. For ten years all four TASMGs maintained KW proficiency and successfully repaired KWs on the battlefield, even though only one TASMG maintained KWs at their home station.

f. The Army's ARI plan transfers all ARNG Apaches to the Active Component by FY18.

g. HQDA ARI FRAGO 8 tasks AMCOM ICW with NGB to determine the TASMG Apache requirement and, if there is a requirement, to propose COAs to fulfill it.

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4. Background.

a. Despite the loss of Apaches under full ARI, the ARNG decision in 2013 was to support the Headquarters Department of the Army's (HQDA) request to maintain an ARNG Apache maintenance capability in the TASMGS. All TASMGS authorizations, including the 35 enlisted Apache mechanics (MOS 15R and 15Y) and 2 Apache test pilots (MOS 153DG), are filled with ARNG soldiers. The number of TASMGS mechanics by type (Apache, Black Hawk, and Chinook) is based on the wartime maintenance workload – and not the number of aircraft by type in the ARNG. The 35 TASMGS Apache mechanic authorizations will not be changed to Black Hawk authorizations, if and when the ARNG loses all ARNG Apaches and gains Black Hawks under ARI. The 2013 decision would keep the ARNG Apache mechanics available to work on ARNG Black Hawks and Chinooks while at home station.

b. The US Army Aviation Center of Excellence (USAACE), HQDA, and ARNG recognize the difficulties in recruiting, training, and retaining TASMGS Apache soldiers after ARI. However, the TASMGS can continue to recruit civilians or “prior-service” 15R/15Y soldiers – and can incorporate the training model currently used to maintain proficiency in KW maintenance to sustain Apache maintenance skill sets. ARNG Apache maintenance proficiency would be sustained during annual training periods and other planned opportunities through established relationships with Corpus Christi Army Depot (CCAD) and AC Army Apache units. Unfortunately, test pilots skills are more perishable and it will not be feasible for the ARNG to fill these positions and sustain adequate proficiency. The temporary duty (TDY) costs to sustain Apache maintenance training away from the TASMGS locations will be minimal. Upon alert for deployment, the Apache mechanics would execute 1st Army guidance for Apache refresher training which would be covered by Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) funds. The TASMGS Apache maintenance task does not go away and the 2013 decision would keep the ARNG doing the full TASMGS combat mission.

c. The TASMGS Apache maintenance survey at Appendix B solicited subject matter expertise (SME) from current and former TASMGS leaders on the feasibility and desirability to retain Apache maintenance capability in the TASMGS. All respondents agreed (one with a caveat) that the TASMGS Wartime Mission is to repair all Army Rotary Wing aircraft. Most agreed that the TASMGS should retain ARNG Apache capability even if ARI eliminates all ARNG Apaches. The majority said that it would be challenging to recruit and train Apache skills for the TASMGS, but some level of Apache proficiency could be maintained by working on AC Apaches at locations such as CCAD. All SMEs acknowledged that the TASMGS Apache mechanics would routinely work on Black Hawks or Chinooks during peacetime support. The majority of the respondents believe that if the ARNG does not fulfill the TASMGS responsibility to repair Apaches during combat, the Army would have to pay for contractor Apache maintenance.

5. Conclusion: It is feasible to maintain Apache maintenance capability in the TASMGS if full ARI is implemented. The best value (and least costly) solution for the Army is to satisfy the Apache battlefield maintenance requirement with ARNG mechanics.

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Training programs can be established to sustain the proficiency of ARNG Apache mechanics in the TASMG when not deployed. However, retaining some ARNG Attack Recon Battalions would ease the challenges faced by the TASMGs related to recruiting, training, and retaining Apache mechanics. Continuing to resource the TASMG battlefield maintenance requirements for all aircraft with ARNG mechanics reduces the need for contractors and saves money.

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Appendix A – Definitions

TASMG Mission

Per Section I of Standard Requirements Code 01980G, the TASMG TOE mission is to provide fixed base dedicated theater aviation sustainment and depot (minus) capability support to the combat commander. The pre-mobilization mission (while at home station) is to perform Aviation field level maintenance (AVUM, AVIM) and sustainment level maintenance (limited depot, NMP) and Class IX support as required for all aviation assets in support of a Regional Support Area consisting of 13 to 15 states.

Sustainment Maintenance Level

AR 750-1 'Army Material Maintenance Policy', Paragraph 3-11 defines Sustainment Maintenance as characterized by the performance of maintenance tasks, "off system" in a secure environment and includes repair and return to stock and depot maintenance operations.

TC 3-04.7 'Army Aviation Maintenance', Paragraph 2-5 defines sustainment maintenance as Army strategic support. The strategic support base is the backbone of the National Maintenance Program (NMP) which supports the supply system by economically repairing or overhauling components as directed by the Army Material Command. Paragraph 2-122 further defines the many warfighting support tasks of the TASMG including assist in port-opening operations, selected depot-level airframe repair, oil analysis, test set calibration, limited rapid parts fabrication, supply support activity (SSA) for Class IX air, crashed or battle-damaged repair, contact/assistance teams and others.

Note: Army references on TASMG mission and Sustainment Maintenance sometimes appear to provide circular definitions. Sustainment Maintenance includes limited Depot Maintenance and the National Maintenance Program, but most TASMG discussions list these capabilities as additional to Sustainment Maintenance.

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Appendix B – TASMG Apache Maintenance Survey

Survey Questionnaire

Under full ARI the ARNG inactivates all 8 Attack Recon Battalions and transfers all Apaches to the Active Component. Based on early coordination with the ARNG, HQDA expects the ARNG to retain Apache maintenance capability in each of the 4 TASMGs.

1. The wartime mission of the TASMG is to repair all Army rotary wing aircraft, even if the ARNG does not have Apaches.
 - a. True
 - b. False
2. The ARNG should retain Apache maintenance capability in each of the TASMGs, even if the ARNG does not have Apaches.
 - a. True
 - b. False
3. It would be difficult to recruit, train, and retain the 35 Enlisted Apache maintenance (15R and 15Y) positions in the TASMG.
 - a. True
 - b. False
4. It would be difficult to recruit, train, and retain the two Apache test pilot (152HL and 152HG) positions in the TASMG.
 - a. True
 - b. False
5. If the TASMG retained Apache maintenance authorizations, the 15R and 15Y soldiers could annually train on Apaches at the Corpus Christi Army Depot or at Active Component Aviation Support Battalions to sustain Apache expertise.
 - a. True
 - b. False
6. Even if it is difficult to keep 15R and 15Y soldiers trained in Apache Maintenance, it is better to keep all the enlisted (and perhaps also the warrant officer) Apache authorizations to help with TASMG's peacetime regional support to ARNG aircraft.
 - a. True
 - b. False
7. The 15R and 15Y soldiers (either traditional M-Day or Full Time Support) would routinely work on Chinooks and Black Hawks while at home station.
 - a. True
 - b. False
8. It is difficult to recruit, train, and retain the Kiowa Warrior enlisted maintenance (15S and 15J) positions in the three TASMGs that do not provide peacetime regional support to ARNG Kiowa Warriors.
 - a. True
 - b. False
9. It is difficult to recruit, train, and retain the Kiowa Warrior test pilots (152DL and 152DG) positions in the three TASMGs that do not provide peacetime regional support to ARNG Kiowa Warriors.

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- a. True b. False

10. It was difficult to train and prepare (pre and post-mobilization) the Kiowa Warrior maintenance soldiers (in the three TASMGS that do not provide peacetime regional support) for deployment.

- a. True b. False

11. If ARI is implemented and the decision is that the ARNG TASMGS do not provide Apache maintenance capability, how would you recommend that HQDA support Apache depot-level maintenance in a combat theater?

- a. Dedicated TASMG Apache Maintenance Det manned by Active Compo.
b. Active Compo soldiers tasked from Active Compo Aviation Support battalions.
c. Apache qualified Contract team
d. Another option – Please explain _____

Survey Results

TASMG leadership completed 6 surveys – 4 are current and 2 are former (retired) leaders. MO TASMG did not submit a survey response. Results are tabulated below. Respondents had a range of AVIM/depot maintenance experience levels – 2.5, 3, 5, 14, 20, and 26 years. * means that per directions MS TASMG did not respond to Kiowa Warrior questions because MO maintained KWs at home station and in combat.

Table with 3 columns: Question, True, False. Contains 11 rows of survey data.

4 – Contract Team
1 – Contract or CCAD
1 – Active Team or AVIM only

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